

FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

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Incorporating Hands Off Ireland!

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ST PAULS ANSWER TO COMMUNITY POLICING

Events in St Pauls, Bristol, over the weekend of 29-31 January, clearly show that the spirit of the St Pauls Uprising in 1980 lives on. The people continue the fight against the British state and its racist police.

On Friday night, 4 black youths went to Barton Hill to visit relatives. They were set upon by a gang of about 20 racist youths who hurled racist abuse and used iron bars against them. One black man, Brenton Watkins, needed 9 stitches as a



CENTRE PAGES

Steven Kitson is released from detention in South Africa after being tortured by the apartheid regime

We report on the campaign to release Steven, the condition of prisoners of war in South Africa and interview Norma Kitson about David Kitson, presently a prisoner of war, serving 20 years in a South African gaol.

Because of David Reed's involvement in the Free Steven Kitson Campaign, part ten of the Communist Tradition on Ireland, 'The Long War' has been held over until the next issue.

SIRS SUPPORTS APARTHEID

Bill Sirs, member of the TUC's International Committee and general secretary of the steelworker's union, has appeared in print singing the praises of the racist South African regime:

'Before I went to South Africa, I was under the impression that industry was totally segregated, that all conditions were bad, and soon we shall witness in that country a holocaust of frightening dimensions. My views have been modified.'

This defence of apartheid appears at the very time when dozens of black trade unionists are being detained by the South African racists.

Not only does Sirs praise apartheid but he is determined to stop black workers from freeing themselves from the clutches of imperialism.

'It is easy to whip up enthusiasm for revolution, but I don't think we should do that.'

Instead Sirs volunteers to train black trade unionists because:

'unless this is done in the correct manner it will go the wrong way'.

That is, it will destroy apartheid and

result. On Saturday a number of black youths went back to Barton Hill to deal with the racists. The police broke up the ensuing battle.

Angry at the fact that the police had stopped them teaching the racists a lesson, the youths returned to St Pauls. There they met two 'community' policemen and there was a fight. The police then brought in large reinforcements and used vans and riot shields to seal off the area.

The people of St Pauls however had no intention of allowing squads of racist police to rampage through their area. Attempts by the police to enter were met with stones and petrol bombs as hundreds of people took to the streets.

These incidents are a decisive answer to the lying claims by the police that 'community' policing and liaison has turned St Pauls into a 'model area' for such schemes. Community policing has received its most significant answer yet. That this answer should come in St Pauls — scene of the first major uprising — is worthy of note.

Of the 20 or more people arrested, two have been remanded in custody. Others have been given bail but with an 8am-7am curfew. They must report daily to the police station and are banned from entering Barton Hill. That is the reality of 'community' policing.



SINN FEIN ATTACKED

The beginning of the year has seen a concerted attack being launched by the RUC — clearly acting under orders from the British government — against Sinn Fein in Belfast. The main focus of the attack has been the Republican Press Centre and Sinn Fein headquarters on the Falls Road. A raid on the Centre just before Christmas was followed at the beginning of January by two further raids in the space of one week. In the first of these raids, on 4 January, Tom Hartley, a member of the Sinn Fein Ard Comhairle, was arrested and detained for two days. Earlier on the same day the home of Danny Morrison, Sinn Fein Director of Publicity and editor of An Phoblacht/Republican News, was also raided: fortunately he was not at home and so escaped arrest. The next raid on the Centre, on 8 January, resulted in the arrest of seven people who were all detained for 48 hours.

The purpose of these raids is all too clear and goes far beyond the usual routine harassment of Sinn Fein. The British government is acutely aware of the political gains made by the Republican Movement over the past year as a result of the hunger strike. Consequently, as

the British government pursues its latest plan to restore 'devolved government' — ie loyalist rule — to the North of Ireland, the suppression of Republican political activity has become an urgent necessity.

Since straightforward political

suppression is incompatible with the 'normalisation' policy to which the British government is still committed the attempt will be made to suppress Sinn Fein through 'legal' methods, using the RUC and the courts.

The last time that a similar attempt was made was four years ago when several leading Sinn Fein activists in Belfast were charged with membership of the IRA and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. That attempt collapsed when it became clear that the 'evidence' was so weak that the political nature of the trial would have been too blatant. Those arrested were therefore eventually released after seven months on remand.

That fiasco has clearly deterred similar attempts until now and this time the RUC are taking much greater care in their efforts to construct a case. Thus in all three of the recent raids on the Press Centre the RUC concentrated their attention on the telex machine which is used to issue Sinn Fein statements and supplied IRA statements to the media. The RUC also seized samples of the telex tape and dusted the machine for fingerprints.

There is little doubt that further raids will take place as the RUC tries to gather 'evidence' in order to prosecute Sinn Fein activists working in the Centre. Sinn Fein, however, has emphasised its determination to resist this latest attack by the state. Joe Austin, spokesman for Belfast Sinn Fein, said after the most recent raid on the Centre:

'It is obvious there is a determined attempt being orchestrated to disrupt Sinn Fein. I can assure the Brits that, come what may, Sinn Fein will not be intimidated and when they are long gone from our country, Sinn Fein will still be functioning'.

Richard McAuley, Chairman of Belfast Sinn Fein, added:

'They may well harass our party and may indeed succeed in imprisoning some of us but they will not stem the rising tide of Irish Republicanism and nationalism'.

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BLOODY SUNDAY ANNIVERSARY

On Sunday 31 January, in a powerful display of anger against British rule in Ireland, 10,000 marched through the streets of Derry in the occupied Six Counties. In spite of recently intensified British army and RUC harassment and intimidation, thousands poured onto the streets to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday. Ten years ago, on 30 January 1972, as a demonstration in Derry against internment was dispersing, British soldiers in a pre-determined and calculated move opened fire and shot dead 14 unarmed civilians.

Neither before nor since Bloody Sunday have the people of Ireland known peace under British rule. They have been ruled by the gun, the plastic bullet, the concentration camp and terror. But none of this has destroyed the revolutionary resistance of the nationalist community in the Six Counties. Speakers at the rally ending the march repeatedly declared that there can be no peace in Ireland whilst it is ruled by British imperialism. Owen Carron MP declared:

'The only solution which guarantees peace, justice and freedom is a 32 County Republic.'

As the march dispersed the people of

Derry were reminded of the violence that is British rule in Ireland. British army soldiers tried to enter the Derry district of Bogside to continue their work of intimidation and harassment. But on Sunday they were met by a group of over 200 youths. 200 youths whose hatred for British imperialism had been further strengthened by the acquittal of the British soldiers charged with murdering 2 Derry youths during the hunger strike. In over two hours of fighting in which the youths used petrol bombs, acid bombs and rocks, British imperialism was reminded that resistance to British rule has not and cannot be destroyed.

EDITORIAL

Act now! Join the fightback

FRFI has been in existence now for just over two years. It has been the only British newspaper to consistently support the anti-imperialist struggle at home and abroad. In those two years we have seen the victory of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle but also the defeat of the heroic Irish hunger strikers in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. While the struggle of the ANC(SA) reached new heights with the unity of the workers, students and military forces against the racist South African regime, the Iranian revolution is suffering blows from the reactionary Khomeini regime. In El Salvador, Guatemala and the Caribbean only US imperialism stands as a barrier to the final victory of the revolutionary democratic forces. The international struggle against imperialism, despite temporary setbacks in certain countries, is clearly advancing. The heroic sacrifices and determination of the revolutionary forces shows that the violence of the imperialist oppressor will be met blow for blow with the revolutionary violence of the oppressed.

Threatened by these developments, imperialism is lashing out with increasing savagery and brutality. The imperialist rulers know only too well that their system can guarantee 'democracy', prosperity, good health and education only for a privileged minority of the world's population. The imperialists know only too well that their days are numbered. The vast majority of mankind is seeking a future that rejects capitalism, exploitation and poverty. The future belongs to communism.

In their desperate battle for survival the imperialists have begun a crusade against communism. A new Cold War has begun. For the allies of those fighting imperialism are the socialist countries. To survive imperialism has set out to undermine and destroy the socialist countries and with them the democratic Republics such as Angola and Mozambique in Africa and Nicaragua in Central America.

The imperialists have found ready allies in the bought-off and corrupt Labour movements of the imperialist nations. What a contrast exists between the revolutionary anti-imperialist forces of the oppressed peoples and the arrogant, reactionary, privileged Labour Movement in Britain!

The leaders of the British Labour Movement, the Gormleys, Duffys, Sirs, Murrays, Jenkins, with their Concorde flights, trips abroad, luxury homes, executive cars and directorships will never take the side of humanity. Nor will a movement that tolerates such people in its ranks ever defend the working class from the growing imperialist onslaught. It is no accident that Bill Sirs, who has

negotiated tens of thousands of redundancies for the steel workers who he is supposed to represent, should also be doing a good public relations job for the fascist South African regime.

The fightback in Britain has not come from the organised Labour Movement but from the oppressed black section of the working class. FRFI gave full support to the Uprisings in Britain over the last year. It alone recognised the revolutionary significance of these developments. It alone continues to support those now suffering the savage revenge of the British state and its police against those that dared to fight back against their oppressors.

Had the organised Labour Movement and the so-called British left chosen to take the side of black youth then the vicious repression now being unleashed in areas like Liverpool 8 would not be possible. While the stinking corrupt British Labour Movement and its rotten 'left' allies in the SWP, IMG, CPGB, WRP, RCT-Party etc campaign over 'democratic rights' in Poland, a police state is being erected here in Britain under their very noses. In Liverpool 8 people are murdered and mutilated by the police. Witnesses to these events are themselves arrested, charged, beaten up and imprisoned. Victims of police assault who complain are framed and gaoled. In the prisons, prisoners are kept like animals. They are tortured with solitary confinement for months, and in some cases years, on end, denied medical treatment, shackled hand and foot, drugged and abused in every possible way. This is the 'democratic Britain' that the Brit-

ish Labour Movement and the British left is so proud of.

Organised protest, even some influential public figures vigorously speaking out on the repression in Liverpool 8, could at this stage significantly lower the level of repression. But the allies of imperialism in the British Labour Movement and the British 'left' place their careers, respectability, security and amiable links with the ruling class far above the democratic rights of the people of Liverpool 8. For twelve years they have known of the brutal repression in the Six Counties of Ireland. They said little and did nothing. Now that repression is unleashed against black people here at home, they still do nothing.

Given this situation, more than ever it is essential for those in Britain who oppose imperialism and racism to join the struggle. Organisation by those determined to fight can have immediate impact. It was a determined, organised, well-publicised campaign which forced the South African authorities to release Steve Kitson. (See pages 8, 9.) It was the same fight and determination which got leading politicians such as Tony Benn to support that campaign. Now the same fight and determination is needed against the brutality in Liverpool 8, the repression in Ireland and the barbaric regime in British prisons. An organised and consciously anti-imperialist movement determined to lead the fight back in this country must be built. Such a movement will not allow the likes of Tony Benn and others who call themselves socialists to remain silent on these issues. So far such a movement does not exist and thousands are suffering the consequences.

Too many readers of FRFI while admiring its content sit on the fence and do nothing. To buy the newspaper, to take out a subscription, to give a donation to our fund, while admirable, is now not enough. The time has come to act before thousands more are brutalised, gaoled, tortured and impoverished by imperialism's vicious onslaught. The time has come for you to join with FRFI supporters to fight back. Contact us now and find out what you can do.

Many more people must today join the side of humanity to fight for democracy and socialism. 1982 must be the year when in Britain those who know what is going on—as all readers of FRFI do—stand up and are counted as part of the fightback.

them, be doing any work to put their principles into practice.

The Leninist has correctly recognised much of what is ideologically wrong with the CPGB. In a fine critique of Aaronovitch's book *The Road From Thatcherism* the author Frank Grafton correctly attacks Aaronovitch for his total rejection of the Marxist theory of crisis—the revolutionary theory that the crisis of capitalism is caused by the falling rate of profit and can be 'solved' within capitalism only by an onslaught on the workers. Correctly Grafton likens Aaronovitch to Kautsky who also believed that the crisis of capitalism was a product of 'wrong' policies and could be corrected by a programme of reform. Correctly he attacks Aaronovitch for the social chauvinism—the programme of 'saving' British capitalist industry through import controls and higher public expenditure—that inevitably flows from these views. But Grafton and The Leninist do not admit for how long—and it is decades—the views of Aaronovitch and similar ones have dominated the CPGB.

Finally The Leninist recognises (and this is the only starting point for a Marxist today) that the strength of opportunism in Britain flows from British imperialism and its ability to create and maintain a privileged labour aristocracy. But The Leninist mechanistically believes that as British imperialism 'declines' in strength so too will opportunism weaken. It is this illusion that is at the root of The Leninist's wrong belief that the CP can 'return' to the working class. Hence The Leninist fails to recognise the enormous obstacle to revolutionary developments which the CP represents. Unless The Leninist's fine words about fighting opportunism are translated into the practical steps of breaking with the CP and contributing to the struggle to build a real communist movement then—despite its theoretical advances—The Leninist will sink in the sea of opportunism. It will become yet another obstacle to those engaged in the fight against imperialism and its opportunist allies.

*See Revolutionary Communist No7—'Critique of the British Road to Socialism'.

Maxine Williams

SOUTH AFRICA

IN BRIEF

● Umkhonto strikes again!

On 26 December 1981, an Umkhonto we Sizwe unit armed with rockets, grenades and AK-47 assault rifles launched a daring attack on Wonderboom Police Station in the heart of Pretoria. South African newspapers commenting on this attack and other Umkhonto operations are being forced to let out the truth about the ANC's armed struggle. The *Rand Daily Mail* wrote 'Sabotage in South Africa has been unparalleled in the past year... Loss of life has been low, but the blow to white morale has been incalculable... the daring of the attackers has the authorities worried'.

● Apartheid saves British economy

Multinational British companies with South African subsidiaries are surviving only because apartheid allows them to extract superprofits by paying starvation wages to black workers. The *South African Sunday Times* speaks of 'international groups which have had to rely on their South African connection to stay in the black'. Amongst these groups is Mitchel Cotts whose 19m rand South African profits accounted for 71% of the whole company's profits! 63% of Metal Box's profits came from South Africa whilst Pilkingtons, the glass manufacturer, made massive losses in Britain, its South African subsidiary made 65m rand profit. Without the superexploitation of black workers, which apartheid enforces, all these British firms would have gone to the wall. It is no surprise therefore, that the British government, guardian of British capitalism, while readily denouncing martial law in Poland, remains silent when apartheid imprisons and murders black trade unionists whose struggle for decent wages and conditions threatens British profits in South Africa.

● Winnie Mandela banned again

Winnie Mandela, wife of Imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela, who was banished to the obscure Afrikaaner town of Bradfort after the Soweto uprising has had her banning order extended for another 5 years. But this time with the additional clause that she is not to meet more than one person at a time and forbidden to be quoted in the South African press. Since 1958, not a year has passed without Winnie being arrested, and persecuted by apartheid. None of this has broken her spirit. In Bradfort she has openly flouted apartheid laws and is engaged in helping to organise and politicise the black community!

● Sun City for whites only

The obscenity of apartheid is displayed shamelessly in Sun City, a £50m luxury gambling den and entertainment resort built by white capitalists in the so-called 'independent' homeland of Bophuthatswana. Whites from all over South Africa can travel there to gamble their ill-gotten wealth and indulge in all manner of degeneracy, all of which is illegal in 'white' South Africa. Meanwhile, outside the bounds of this luxury resort, black people forced to live in Bophuthatswana suffer starvation and unemployment. While whites in Sun City enjoy to excess the wealth they have robbed from South Africa's blacks, the population of Winterveld, a 'town' in the same homeland; live, in the words of the *Financial Times*, in 'a city—of shanties... ranging from corrugated iron sheds to mud huts... it is a rural slum. There are no services—no electricity, no sewerage, just the occasional borehole or pump and it contains more than half a million people'. Singers such as Lulu and Shirley Bassey pocket large fees for entertaining rich whites in Sun City, regardless of the fact that it is situated in the middle of a concentration camp created and run by the racist South African regime.

● Mxenge's work continues

Following the brutal torture and murder of Griffiths Mxenge, the tireless ANC lawyer loved by South Africa's blacks, his widow Mrs Monyamezelo Mxenge declared: 'If by killing my husband they thought the work he was doing would come to an end, they have made a mistake. I'll continue even if it means I must also die'. She has now taken over Griffiths' law firm in Durban which worked largely for political prisoners in South Africa. Despite her terrible personal tragedy Mrs Monyamezelo Mxenge stated 'I see a very bright future in the very near future. These things which are happening around us, detentions, deaths in detentions, killings, are the kickings of a dying horse'.

REVIEW

Review: The Leninist 'Communist Theoretical Journal' no1. Price £1 from The Leninist Publications, PO Box 429, London NW11.

Amidst a stream of 'left' journals all competing to revise Marxism and bury Leninism it is refreshing to come across a journal such as this. Much of its content is a defence of Leninism against its enemies. As the authors are clearly members of, or associated with the CPGB they concentrate on attacking the anti-Leninism of that organisation. And it is a pleasure to read a thorough critique of the reformist Left Alternative Strategy and a restatement of the basic Marxist position on the Irish question. The RCG has already understood and written about many of the questions dealt with by The Leninist.* Nevertheless it is a cause for optimism that others should be treading the same ground and coming to some of the same conclusions.

I emphasise some of the same conclusions because The Leninist has a very worrying feature. Its declared aim is to set the CPGB on to the Marxist road:

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SOUTH AFRICA

ISOLATE APARTHEID!

While the British imperialist press busily denounces martial law in Poland and hypocritically proclaims itself in favour of 'democracy' and 'free trade unions' it has hardly a word about the South African regime's recent attempts to stamp out any and every expression of opposition to apartheid. Yet the apartheid regime, armed with fascist force and a battery of most despotic laws, is carrying out a massive number of arrests and detentions in an attempt to smash independent black trade unions and all other opposition to its bloody rule.

Arbitrary arrest and detention is an everyday experience for black people in South Africa. Over 18,000 have been detained since 1960 under the *Internal Security Act*, the *General Law Amendment Act*, and the most frequently used, *Terrorism Act*. Those arrested under the *Terrorism Act* can be held indefinitely without charge, they are held incommunicado with no access to family or legal representation, they can be interrogated for 24 hours a day and the police are not obliged to reveal the detainee's whereabouts. They are at the mercy of a merciless and savage security machine. During 1981 over 620 people were detained of which 306 were trade unionists and workers.

Terrified of the growing power of independent black trade unions, the apartheid state machine hopes to crush them by arresting their leaders and organisers. Thozamile Gqweta, President of the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) which has massive support in East London and the Ciskei because of its staunch opposition to apartheid and the bantustan policy, was arrested on 9 December along with the union's Vice-President Sisas Npkelan.

Thozamile Gqweta has also had his mother and uncle murdered by apartheid forces. And at the funeral, his girlfriend was shot dead by police. In late November, 15 other leading trade unionists were arrested and detained under the *Terrorism Act*. They include Sam Kikine the General Secretary of the SAAWU, Samson Ndou the union's President, Emma Mashinini General Secretary of the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union and many others. The South African government has announced a mass 'security' trial to begin shortly when some of those arrested are to be charged with 'terrorism' and 'furthering the aims of the ANC'. Meanwhile they are being held in complete isolation from the outside world.

The net of apartheid detention is not restricted to trade unionists and open ANC supporters. Journalists, community workers, church activists, students, white liberals, academics and anyone who dares express even the slightest opposition to apartheid is being arrested and thrown into detention. The Detainees Parents' Support Group formed to demand the immediate release of all detainees issued a statement on 28

December revealing that of the known 180 current detainees only 18 have been allowed visits. The remainder, isolated and alone, are being subjected to who knows what torture and degradation behind the iron doors of apartheid police stations.

Alongside detention is murder; murder by apartheid state forces or apartheid organised fascist bands—the murder of Griffiths Mxenge, the murder of Joan Weinberg, the murder of Joe Gqabi in Zimbabwe, the murder of 13 ANC members in Matola last January.

British imperialism has been silent about all this. It has been silent because the struggle of the ANC, the struggle of black workers threatens to undermine and destroy imperialism in South Africa, and with it the profits of British banks and British firms operating in South Africa. The British labour movement too, has hardly moved a muscle in support of black trade unionists and revolutionaries in South Africa. Why no campaign, even half as energetic as that conducted against socialist Poland? Because the privileged existence of the opportunist leaders depends on imperialism, on national oppression, including oppression in South Africa. Despite the repeated calls of the ANC, the TUC has refused to disinvest or to build a campaign to end economic links with apartheid. The corrupted British labour movement is an accomplice of imperialism in its oppression of the South African masses.

The black masses of South Africa and the ANC will not bow before apartheid violence, neither do they fear the sacrifices required in the war against apartheid. With the opening of 1982, the African National Congress is poised to deliver further heavy blows to apartheid and imperialism. Throughout last year

at hundreds of public meetings, church congregations, social events and funerals of ANC heroes, the black masses demonstrated their support for the ANC. They hoisted ANC flags, wore ANC t-shirts and applauded militant speeches in support of the ANC and the demands of the Freedom Charter. At the December funeral of Griffiths Mxenge, ANC lawyer murdered by apartheid, over 20,000 people hailed the ANC. A witness to the funeral said 'It wasn't a funeral, it was like an ANC gathering'. Alongside the ANC's mass political struggle, the people's army—Umkhonto we Sizwe—has raised the armed struggle to new heights. In 1981 it carried out over 50 operations against railway lines, Defence Force installations, police stations, government offices, oil storage depots and power stations.

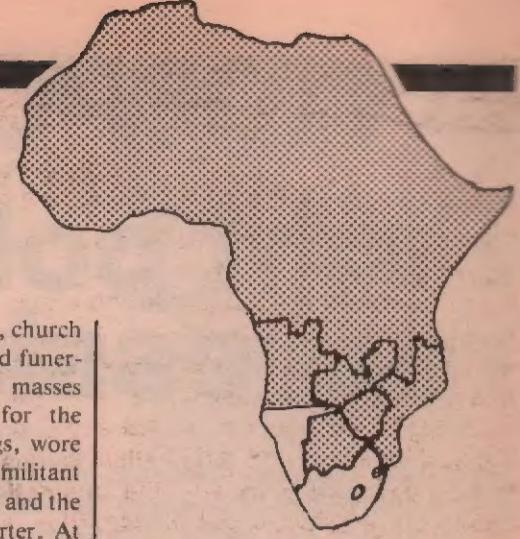
This revolutionary struggle can only grow stronger and it is a struggle in which the enemy has been clearly defined. Seretse Choabi speaking for the ANC, in London on Heroes Day 16 December 1981 said:

'The real enemy of our people are not the white settlers in South Africa. No. The real enemy is here in London. The real enemy is in New York. The white settlers in South Africa are only the caretakers of imperialist interests in South Africa.'

The ANC is part of the international revolutionary front against imperialism and racism, and communists in Britain stand alongside it and declare

**Release all detainees now!
Death to British imperialism!
Death to apartheid!
Victory to the ANC!**

Eddie Abrahams



Oscar Mpetha

Oscar Mpetha is a black trade unionist, national organiser of the African Food and Canning Workers Union and chairman of the Nyanga Residents Association. In August 1980 he and 17 others were arrested and detained under the notorious Terrorism Act.

Oscar Mpetha is now 72 years old and suffers from acute diabetes. 18 months after his arrest, he is still in prison while his trial drags on and on. For the first four months of his detention he was denied all visits from his family, suffered solitary confinement and had to be taken to the prison hospital for medical treatment. There is no end in sight to his trial. The apartheid state is expected to close its case only in May or June 1982, after which the defence will put its case. The trial could last until the end of this year and judgement passed in 1983.

During the trial which has lasted well over 9 months, it has been revealed that statements from 5 defendants were extracted by torture and assault. The apartheid state is fabricating evidence, torturing the accused and hoping that Oscar Mpetha will die in prison before judgement is passed.

Free Oscar Mpetha and his 17 comrades!

Interview with Norma Kitson

continued from page 9

was never released. We had no access to him. I was taking in his meals and taking his washing away and getting some blood stained and ripped clothing back to wash. I was desperate.

After his eighteenth day in solitary confinement I went and stood on the City Hall steps, which was illegal in South Africa, with my children, pleading to the South African people and trying to get a response from the authorities to either release or charge him if they had evidence against him. It was a very desperate time. By then 800 people had been put in detention, 800 that they admitted. After his second period of detention he was charged and then the trial started.

Most of the trial was held in camera. All the evidence was verbal and given by detainees who had been held in detention themselves. In a proper court of law this wouldn't have been admissible. On the first day of the case, Mac Maharaj stood up and told the judge that he had been tortured, that he had had a nail knocked through his penis and that he'd had his eye injured. Judge Boshof just said that's not a matter for this court and the case continued.

The men were wonderful. The five of them wore red ties. They were terribly brave and they all looked pale and ill but they had tremendous spirit. They came into the court almost as if they were winning a battle, not on trial for their lives. When one witness was brought in on a stretcher the judge made the case in camera and excluded us from the court, except on the final day of sentence. David's comment on the trial, after being sentenced, to 20 years was,

'Perhaps I may consider it a personal misfortune that it had to be me, but I had my turn at enjoying myself overseas, and am proud to contribute

my part to the inescapable struggle through which the South African people are going.'

And a press cutting from that period said,

'With shouts of "Amandla Ngwethu" and "Mayibuye" as they gave clenched-fist and thumbs-up salutes, the five men found to have been members of the "National High Command" and to have conspired with the Rivonia Trialists and others to bring about violent revolution, were taken from the Rand Supreme Court this morning to serve prison sentences ranging from life imprisonment to 12 years.'

FRFI: What were the conditions in which he was held immediately after sentence?

Norma Kitson: We knew that he was still in solitary which is illegal. We also knew that the political prisoners were not given copies of the prison regulations to which they were entitled, to know their rights. But we didn't know anything else. We had one visit of 20 minutes and one letter of 300 words every six months.

Initially the white prisoners were held at Pretoria Central Gaol. They had a huge impact on the other prisoners. They started classes in marxism. They stopped prisoners grassing on one another as they built up comradeship. They stopped the whole tobacco trading system which was iniquitous.

FRFI: Soon after they moved the political prisoners?

Norma Kitson: Yes, they built a special maximum security gaol called Pretoria Local, where the political prisoners were separated from the others.

FRFI: In 1966 you left South Africa and came to England, because of harassment of you and your children by the state. Did you ever return to visit Dave?

Norma Kitson: Yes I did whenever I could. On one occasion when I went back I was stopped and taken for interrogation to Compel. I said I would not go on a voluntary basis so they pulled out a gun

and said you are going on a voluntary basis. I was allowed to make a phone call and they told me what to say. I had to say that I was quite all right, and that I was being taken to make a voluntary statement.

They hung me out of the window from the seventh floor of Compel building Pretoria. Swanepoel, known as the beast of Compel, threatened me with a gun. That didn't actually frighten me because when they hung me out of the window I thought I was going to die. One of my best friends died that way. Swanepoel boasted to me when I was in solitary confinement that he had thrown him out of the window. There is a photograph of (Babla) Suliman Sahojee's body on the ground with Swanepoel standing over it grinning.

But when they threatened to run the children over, I made a statement. They weren't really interested in my statement, what they wanted me to do was to give them information when I got to London. I just got on the next plane and got out of South Africa. I reported everything that had happened to me to my movement. I rejoined the ANC openly and became active.

FRFI: How is David today and what are the current conditions in which he is being held?

Norma Kitson: In 1979 3 of the political prisoners escaped and the other white political prisoners were transferred to the section for the Criminally Insane in the Maximum Security wing of Pretoria Central gaol, the hanging gaol. There are over 100 people a year hanged in South Africa, a murder record! It's a very bad section, it's the worst section of the gaol. Over the past winter they have kept David without heating and hot water. He was too cold to leave his cell and he got severe bronchitis. We fear very much for the conditions under which he's being kept, but we have very little knowledge other than that.

FRFI: What's the significance of the arrest of Steven and the murder of your sister Joan

Weinberg given that David still has three years of imprisonment to face?

Norma Kitson: I think that over all the years they've tried to get David to renounce his politics. They've never managed to shift him in any way. I think they are very angry that after all this time and after all they have done to him, they've never managed to break him. They've decided on an onslaught in this period. They kept him without heat, then they delayed my letters for three months, which kept him out of contact with me. Then they arrested his son.

They did it at a very special moment just before the last visit, because prisoners always save the emotional content for the last visit. They arrested Steven just before that. And then they told David about Steven's arrest. I think that one way you can really unsettle someone is to do something to their children. Steven got out and the next day my sister was murdered. My sister was David's contact over the 15 years since I left South Africa. She was the person who visited him every month, and arranged for the other visits. Neither myself, Mandla nor Steven can now visit him. Every single contact has been broken. All we can expect are sporadic visitors. We won't be able to see how he is.

FRFI: The vigorous protest about Steven's detention and torture succeeded in getting his release very quickly. What can be done in this country to free David Kitson?

Norma Kitson: I think we can free David Kitson if ordinary people mobilise and keep the campaign going. I think we can get him released, but more important than that, it raises the whole issue of prisoners of war in South Africa. If there was an election in South Africa tomorrow then you'd find that the majority of the legitimate government is in gaol on Robben Island. So a campaign to free David Kitson can be seen as part of the effort to build support in Britain for the struggle of the African National Congress for a free democratic South Africa.

LIVERPOOL Fight police repression

Repression continues unabated in Liverpool 8. Victims of police assault, like Michael Blaney and Phil Robins, have themselves been arrested; those engaged in defence work, like Ivan Freeman (also a witness to David Moore's murder) have been arrested. While the two policemen charged with the 'manslaughter' of David Moore, walk free on bail, those who stand up to the police are being systematically framed by the police and courts.

Where is the outcry? Whilst press and TV gave a fanfare to the 'community policing' in Liverpool – the real tale of repression and intimidation goes unreported and unknown.

After six months, the Liverpool police have finally plucked up the courage to arrest Ivan Freeman – something which sooner or later they were bound to do, for Ivan is one witness to the murder of David Moore whom they have been unable to intimidate. Ivan was arrested on 19 January in the early afternoon in the centre of town in a small-scale military operation, involving about twenty policemen with assorted vans and panda cars. Initially, he was told that he was being arrested for a burglary that had taken place five minutes before just round a corner. Within a few minutes, the alleged burglary had been shifted back to last September. When he finally reached Coppers Hill, the 'truth' came out: he had been 'recognised' by countless policemen tearing up railings in Upper Parliament Street on 5 July causing £3,000 worth of damage. It would seem that the night vision of the Liverpool police is one of Nature's wonders. Readers will remember that Ivan had earlier been accosted by the police when he went to make a statement to his solicitor about David Moore's murder, and that he had walked out on them when they tried to question him, and furthermore, that they had later smashed up his flat. Now they are claiming that they had actually arrested him, so that on top of the charges of causing criminal damage, threatening behaviour and distributing inflammatory leaflets, he is also charged with escaping arrest! Some 'escape' when since then Ivan has appeared on television as a spokesman for the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee. But ludicrous though the charges are, there is no doubt that the police will try to make them stick, to discredit Ivan in the event that he is called to give evidence in the David Moore case.

Michael Blaney

Michael Blaney, who was viciously attacked by a policeman with a machete, has now been charged with wasting police time. Soon after Blaney put in a complaint about the attack – which was widely reported – articles began to appear in the *Post/Echo* saying that the police were having 'difficulty' tracing witnesses to the attack. This was, of course, a complete lie. There had been witnesses, the police knew who they were, but they had put the frighteners on them. So successful has been their intimidation that they have now turned round and, on top of almost castrating Michael Blaney, are trying to fit him up as well.

Phil Robins

Phil Robins, shot twice in the chest and back with CS gas canisters last July, is now in Risley remand centre. Since last October, the police have been trying to evade their responsibility for the dreadful injuries they inflicted on him, in the way they know best: by framing him. By this, they hope to avoid paying compensation... after all, why compensate a mere

narrative to the fact that she had spent the evening recovering from the shock of seeing David Moore's injuries and was trying to get home when she was arrested, beaten, insulted, spat on and threatened with rape. The dismissal of her appeal was based on the word of one policeman – PC Cunningham. This was despite glaring inconsistencies in the evidence – for instance, the existence of two charge sheets, one saying that she had been arrested in Upper Parliament Street, the other, on the corner of Selborne Street and Mulgrave Street. In fact, she was arrested in Kimberly Close. The injuries she had got? Those must have happened in the brief period when she was out of his sight. Donna's sentence was not changed – three months suspended for two years, and £250 fine. As a consequence of this, she has lost her job as a solicitor's clerk, and has of course little chance of getting another. That is the fate the British state has in store for anyone who could be a witness to one of its murders.

Chris O'Donoghue

Chris O'Donoghue has been one of the most fortunate of those facing the courts as a result of the uprising last summer. For the police totally failed in their efforts to paint him as a one-man riot. Instead, he was acquitted on all the seven charges he faced – one of throwing a petrol bomb, two of affray, three of possession of an offensive weapon, and one of arson. He was arrested on 8 July two days after the first uprising, butted and kicked before being thrown in a van. Taken to the main Bridewell, he was beaten again, and forced to sign a confession at 4am, eight hours after his arrest, to the effect that he had been throwing stones. He was then charged with attempted GBH and possession of a petrol bomb, and thrown into Risley. At committal, these two charges were replaced by the seven above.

At the trial, thirteen coppers were produced who 'positively' identified him as a ringleader, organising kids to make petrol bombs, driving a van and car at police lines etc. Despite this 'positive identification', he seemed to have spent a lot of time changing clothes in between spells of rioting: one policeman

said he was wearing red cords, another swore it was blue jeans. Yet another noted that he had white shoes; no, was the verdict of another, they were red. And to ensure complete confusion, one school of police-thought reckoned he was wearing a tan t-shirt, whilst another held that he was naked from the waist up. Preferring safer methods of securing convictions than presenting mere evidence, the police had earlier informed three of his defence witnesses to drop their statements, as Chris was pleading guilty. That lie failed, but on Christmas Eve, they picked up another witness, and saying 'You're a witness for Chris O'Donoghue', promptly slapped a drunk and disorderly charge on him. Fortunately in court, the jury paid no attention to the nonsense coming from the police, but rather more to the beating Chris had had, and the injuries noted by the doctor at Risley, and because of that, Chris is now pursuing a complaint against the police.

David Moore

The two policemen charged with the manslaughter of David Moore were committed to trial on 11 January. But in sharp contrast to the treatment of Chris O'Donoghue and Phil Robins, they were both released on bail. At the committal, the court was packed: police on one side, and Liverpool 8 youth on the other. As the charge manslaughter was read out, a roar went up from the youth 'murder'. This was too much for the magistrate, who ordered the court to be cleared. One youth was arrested in this protest at the impending cover up. It should be remembered that seven days later, two soldiers who drove their jeep at 65pm into a crowd of Derry youths protesting the murder of Bobby Sands, murdering two of them, were acquitted of the charges they faced – reckless driving. There is no doubt that such 'justice' is being prepared for these two policemen.

BRADFORD 12 BAIL THREAT

With less than 3 months before the beginning of their trial in Leeds the Bradford 12 have had another foretaste of the ruling class justice that awaits them.

Only some five days following the successful demonstration on 12 December, the state made its intentions clear. In an act of sheer intimidation, designed to enforce the brutal bail conditions, the police re-arrested Tarlochan Gata-aura as he arrived at the police station to 'sign on' – a visit he is required to make every morning! He was pushed into a cell, subjected to an interrogation and then charged. His crime? The police alleged that he attended the demonstration on 12 December called to support the Bradford 12. Tarlochan was held overnight in the cells and then brought up, the next morning, before the magistrates. The magistrates, of course, did not hesitate to believe the police's case. It emerged in court that under the bail

conditions imposed on the 12, 'attending' a demonstration did not mean to march and chant with the other protesters. For the Bradford 12 'attending' a demonstration can consist of merely being in the vicinity, or happening to glance at a protest in support of yourself. No doubt the police were shaken by the success of the 12 December demonstration – this arrest was their response to the militant youth of that day. It is also known that the decision to re-arrest Tarlochan Gata-aura was taken at the highest levels of the British state. This was why they waited several days after the demonstration to arrest him. They used these days to get permission from the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Tarlochan Gata-aura was found guilty of breaking his bail conditions and was released with a warning from the magistrates. A warning to him and his eleven comrades of what lies ahead.

BB

IMMIGRATION RAID ON FACTORY

On 6 January a squad of over 20 police headed by Chief Superintendent Hubbard from Wimbledon police station surrounded Smith Meters factory in Streatham Vale. In a well-organised raid they entered the factory and took away 16 black workers – all from Africa.

All were suspected of contravening the Immigration controls. Four of them are still detained in Ashford Remand Centre – they have already been through court and are awaiting deportation as 'illegal' immigrants. For these men there is no right of appeal, legally they are not in the country! The fate of the others is uncertain.

One of those arrested managed to jump over a wall and escape – only to be arrested later in his own home.

Obviously the police knew exactly who they wanted, their names and

addresses, where this information came from is not so clear. All of the 16 had been at the factory for over 18 months – some for five years. And by some strange coincidence it is redundancy-time at Smith Meters. 200 were laid off in December and another 200 in January. Has Smith Meters found a new method of reducing their redundancy payment bill at the expense of their black workers?

Immigration controls were introduced to meet the needs of the bosses such as Smith Meters. Their original purpose was to provide cheap labour on demand – now this cheap labour is coming, in plentiful supply, from within the white working class. Immigration controls are now the means by which immigrant labour, that is black labour, can be controlled, intimidated or dispensed with – just as the 4 brothers from Streatham have been dispensed with.

CO



Khans to be deported

Whitelaw says Khans must go!
Home Secretary William Whitelaw has delivered his racist verdict on the Khan family who have been under threat of deportation for months past.

By January a militant campaign including marches and rallies had forced Whitelaw to say he would 'reconsider' the case. But now Whitelaw has decided that the Khans must be deported. With the arrogant racism typical of the British ruling class Whitelaw says that to allow the Khans to stay in Britain would:

"undermine the immigration control which I see as a necessary adjunct to good community relations."

So the Khan family including their two British-born children face the prospect of being removed from their home and friends and returned to Pakistan which Mr Khan left when he was 13 years old.

But the anger of the Asian community and its supporters in Manchester is great. On Saturday 23 January a further militant march was held drawing wide support. The campaign continues and all those willing to work in defence of the Khan family must come to the Defence Committee meetings every Wednesday at 7.15pm at Longsight Library.

Khan family in!
Immigration controls out!

Malik Sivam

NEW CROSS



Thirteen dead – nothing said

Remember 18 January 1981. Yet another Bloody Sunday in Britain's racist, imperialist history. 13 black children were massacred in the early hours of that morning at a birthday party at 439 New Cross Road, South London. A fire bomb gutted the house of Mrs Amza Ruddock who held the party for her 16 year old daughter, Yvonne, one of those who tragically lost their lives. 29 others were injured, some very seriously. The thirteen who died were:

Yvonne Ruddock (16) and her brother Paul (22)
Lilian Henry (16) Andrew Gooding (14)
Lloyd Hall (20) Humphrey Brown (18)
Patricia Johnson (15) Peter Campbell (18)
Gerry Francis (16) Patrick Cummings (16)
Steve Collins (17) Owen Thompson (16)
Glen Powell (16)

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! honours their memory.

This was the worst racist atrocity ever perpetrated against the black community in Britain. From the beginning the battle for the truth and the arrest of the murderers was launched against a racist conspiracy of police, press and parliament. No message of sympathy was received from Thatcher, local MP John Silkin or any other leading politician. Six days after the fire, Commander Stockwell was feeding lies to the press,

the *Daily Mail* reported that 8 black youths were to be arrested in connection with the fire. Within a week meetings of 300 and 2,000 had gathered to organise the campaign to support the families and to combat the racist cover-up.

On 2 March 15,000, predominantly black workers, marched militantly on the Black Peoples' Day Of Action from New Cross, across Blackfriars Bridge, into Fleet Street and Hyde Park. Pro-

testing against the press/police cover up, they chanted: 'Forward to Freedom, Babylon will Fall!', 'No stopping us now we're on the move.' Fleet Street trembled with fear. The police failed to stop the march but arrested over 70.

The inquest opened on 21 April led by a racist coroner who intended to complete his dirty work in three days. 'There was a fight at a party and that's it.' He knew intimate details of the people at the New Cross fire which only the police could have provided. The police had suppressed right up until the inquest the fact that they had found a firebomb outside the window of the house after the fire. Despite this and all the other evidence the coroner refused to allow the jury to consider the verdict of unlawful killing, the only verdict acceptable to the relatives of the thirteen dead and to the black community. By their brave defiance in the coroner's court, the relatives and friends of the dead nevertheless defeated the police and the coroner's attempts to implicate the black youth at the party and forced the world to see the racist way the coroner handled the inquest.

The campaign to demand a new inquest continues and the New Cross Massacre Action Committee is also to hold an International Commission of Enquiry into the fire in order to put forward the people's judgement on what happened.

Tony Sheridan

New Cross Anniversary Meeting

The New Cross Massacre Action Committee held a memorial meeting on Monday 18 January. Deptford Town Hall was packed by 300 people who heard members of the NCMAC, Mr Francis and other relatives of the victims, tell once again of the racist firebombing which caused the massacre, and of the countrywide militant response from the black community culminating in the magnificent Black Peoples' Day of Action. Darcus Howe, editor of *Race Today* and Treasurer of the NCMAC warned the government that the response of the black youth to a refusal to hold a new inquest would be of a militancy surpassing that of the Day of Action.

A spontaneous decision was made by the NCMAC to march from the Town Hall after the meeting. Numbers grew to 500 as people came off the pavements to march past Deptford police station and on to 439 New Cross Road. The assembly held a minute's silence in memory of the dead.

Dundee Asians framed

At the recent trial of six Pakistani men in Dundee, the local colonial sheriff praised the Asian community in Dundee for their 'peacefulness' but went on to find four of the accused guilty of assault charges.

The well-tried racist manoeuvre of arrest and fitting-up of Asian and black people for defending themselves from racist attack, in this case 100 white youths shouting NF slogans and throwing stones and bottles, was used.

Mohammed Zulfquar Khan and Mohammed Aslam junior were acquitted because of the ludicrously exaggerated police 'evidence' against them. The police had obviously forgotten to tell their more enthusiastic officers that to claim to have been repeatedly assaulted by a metal bar, as Constable Pallister did, would require evidence of serious medical injury.

Mohammed Aslam senior told the court of arriving at Beechwood for a religious festival. Ironically the despicably racist D C Thomson's local paper accurately described the scene by writing:

'When he arrived outside his brother's house a large gang of white youths and the police were already there.'

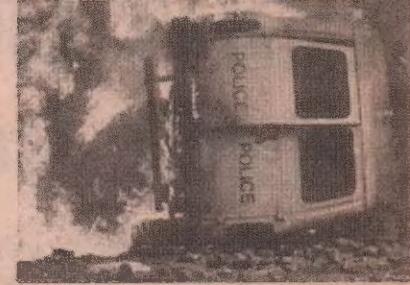
Predictably the cowardly Dundee police had refrained from dispersing the racist mob on that particular weekend despite its usual harassment of local youth.

Equally predictably the sheriff found four of the men – Mohammed Aslam, Mohammed Ramzan Rassul, Mohammed Arshad Rasul and Mohammed Afzad guilty of various charges of assault and brandishing weapons and fined them £250 in total.

The local Asian community, of 3000 people, is very angry at the outcome of the trial and it has aroused considerable interest throughout Scotland. However, the failure of the local Race Relations Committee to take up the case and campaign publicly gives the Dundee police more confidence to repeat their tactics and more than ever shows the necessity of building an active campaign amongst working people which asserts the right of the Asian community to defend itself from racist attack.

MT

FIGHT RACISM



IN BRIEF

● Tebbit the racist

During the Queen's Speech debate in Parliament last November, Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary for (Un)Employment, was questioned about the fact that black workers suffer a higher rate of unemployment than white workers. His reply, as the Cabinet Minister responsible, revealed that open racism of the crudest and most poisonous kind is now official Government policy.

Mr Tebbit said that he did not want to enter the debate 'on what part of the disadvantages of ethnic minority groups arises from unchangeable heredity and what part from changeable environment... I know not whether it is a matter of heredity that causes Asian shopkeepers to open their shops earlier and to close them later than many others.'

After delivering this racist outburst, based on the infamous slave-trader 'heredity' propaganda used to justify slavery and now revived to serve the needs of imperialism, Tebbit went on to encourage racists to take pride in their racism. He said 'We of European stock have no need to torture ourselves with guilt in the belief that it is only white people who are prejudiced or who discriminate on grounds of race...'

TM

● Edinburgh police: another death in custody?

Anthony Wilson, a 26 year old scaffolder from the Broomhouse estate, was removed from his home by police in the early hours of 5 January. One week later he was found dead in a snowdrift miles from his home.

It is very hard to think of any other explanation than that Anthony Wilson was driven out of Edinburgh and dropped off to find his own way home – in a temperature well below freezing point. This has been the experience of many victims of the police – in this case it would amount to murder to abandon someone in the middle of the freeze.

Two policemen have been suspended given the 'inexplicable circumstances' of this death during police custody. However going on past experience an inquest verdict of 'hyperthermia' is to be expected.

● Defend Ossie Cameron

1981 was said to be International Year of the Disabled. The police took note and turned their violence against the disabled. They murdered Davy Moore in Liverpool. Also in the summer, 15 Birmingham policemen attacked Ossie Cameron, a black youth who has suffered epilepsy since childhood. The police set on him in the street attempting to force him to open his bag. He refused and tried vainly to defend himself. As is normal in cases where the police use violence, their victim, Ossie, was himself charged with four counts of assaulting the police.

In court Ossie and his family had to suffer the humiliation of a solicitor who bargained with the police that if Ossie pleaded guilty to one charge then the other three would be dropped. Ossie has told his solicitor he was not guilty but the solicitor insisted that Ossie plead guilty. This so called defence solicitor also told the court that in his opinion Ossie was unable to think for himself. This lie revealed his racist contempt for Ossie.

Ossie got a £100 fine and two years probation thus ensuring that if the police decide to frame him again he will go to prison.

Marie Jay

Leeds 8 show trial

One of the last trials of those arrested on charges arising from the uprisings had just taken place – and it was the finale of a series of police frame-ups and a complete charade of justice. It was a show trial which lived up to all expectations with 6 charges being brought against Chris Hankinson (23). 5 of these charges were related to petrol bombs and the other was attempting to cause grievous bodily harm by assault on a policeman.

The police evidence tried to make out that Hankinson had organised the uprisings in Leeds and as in the previous trial of the others in the Leeds 8 (see FRFI 15) explicitly political evidence was used by the police to ensure a conviction. Hankinson was accused of running around between groups of youths lighting petrol bombs and directing events. But the police, despite their efforts to produce evidence that Hankinson was a ringleader with extremist political views, failed and their case degenerated into a mass of contradictions and lies.

Hankinson was eventually sentenced to 18 months in jail for throwing a brick at the police after the 5 petrol bomb charges had been thrown out by the jury. This sentence has been brought against a well-known pacifist and shows once again the way the Chartist police will use frame-ups to ensure that the youth in Chartist will not vent their righteous anger on the streets.

Chas Millington

MICHAEL FRANCOIS

Michael Francois was charged in April 1980 with robbery of a jewellers in North London. Last year Brixton police raided Mike's flat 'in connection with another crime'. Whilst there they seized tapes and defence files he had compiled for his pending court case. But for the police's incompetence the fact that these documents had been passed on to Miles and Kelly at Kings Cross police station, who are centrally involved in this case, would never have been revealed. When the files were eventually returned correspondence between the two police stations was left in them!

Under British law it has always been the right of the defence to see prosecution evidence – never has there been the right of the prosecution to have access to defence material.

At the Inner London Crown Court in January counsel for the defence submitted, over a two-day period, evidence as to why it was impossible to get a fair trial due to the seizure of the files and the additional fact that the police had

'approached' a defence witness.

Judge Shindler, faithful servant of the ruling class, remained true to form, ignored the overwhelming evidence of 'an abuse of the process of the court' and said that the trial would go ahead and not be kicked out of court. Precedent set, we can now expect the state to take many more such liberties with the rights of those who come before its 'justice'.

Michael Francois organised pickets of Brixton police station in the fight to get his documents back – he won. He was also responsible for the exposé of the openly racist screws wearing NF badges at Wandsworth nick last year.

Could it be just coincidence or vindictiveness that Mike, one who fights for the rights of others, is the first victim that the state singles out in taking yet another right from the working class? Or that Mike, who has been out on bail since April 1980, should, within a week of this trial starting, be remanded in custody. In a document he sent to the Home Office protesting at prison conditions he says 'Remand is a form of punishment imposed by the police because the prisoner has chosen to plead not guilty, or simply to show him they have the power and support of the magistrates to get him into prison before he is found guilty'. The case continues.

Ace Kelly

POLAND LEFT AND RIGHT UNITE TO FIGHT SOCIALISM

The imposition of martial law in Poland on 13 December was a decisive blow to imperialist plans against the Polish socialist state. Whilst the imperialists prepare their next moves, they have unleashed a flood of anti-communist and hypocritical denunciations of the Polish Government and the Soviet Union.

The British media and British politicians eagerly denounced martial law and detention camps in Poland, while the British Government maintains the concentration camps of H-Block and Armagh and has indeed turned the whole of the northern Six Counties of Ireland into a vast prison, murdered 10 Irish political prisoners and shoots down little children with impunity. They support 'free elections' and 'free trade unions' in Poland whilst at the same time support the racist apartheid state which is arresting and detaining black trade union leaders and which denies 26 million blacks in South Africa the right to vote. The US government vociferously condemns martial law in Poland, whilst it enthusiastically supports the military junta in El Salvador which has slaughtered 30,000 workers and peasants in the last 2 years, it supports the Guatemalan junta which last year murdered 11,000 people and the Turkish junta which has detained and tortured over 50,000 people. Imperialism while supporting 'democracy' for the pro-capitalist forces of Solidarity and KOR, is trying to smash the democratic, anti-imperialist movement of South Africa, Ireland, El Salvador, Turkey, Guatemala, Palestine and elsewhere.

Imperialism's hypocritical campaign against the USSR and Poland is part and parcel of its attempts to crush a rising tide of democratic anti-imperialist revolutions. The USSR today stands as the main ally of socialist Cuba and Vietnam against imperialist aggression. Despite their own economic difficulties the socialist countries provide the military and political assistance with which the democratic anti-imperialist governments of Angola and Mozambique resist the apartheid war machine. It has been the USSR and the other socialist countries which have provided the arms and aid with which the ANC is fighting the fascist South African regime. Imperialism is therefore intent on exploiting the situation in Poland in an attempt to undermine a bastion of the world-wide democratic and anti-imperialist movements.

Since 13 December, the counter-revolutionary character of imperialist intervention in Poland and the anti-working class reactionary character of its proteges in Solidarity have been further exposed. As the Polish Government and Polish people attempt to overcome grave economic difficulties, the imperialist powers are trying to cripple the Polish economy by preparing sanctions against it. Responding to sanctions already imposed by the US government, General Jaruzelski said:

'There are no limits to hypocrisy, the (US) government which has for years been torpedoing the imposition of sanctions on the great concentration camp which is the Republic of South Africa, does not hesitate to impose sanctions against Poland.'

How true of British imperialism too which, along with the US, also continues to trade with fascist regimes in Chile, South Korea, Argentina, Israel, South Africa and elsewhere. The only real assistance to Poland today comes from the other socialist countries who have sent in vast amounts of food and other aid. Meanwhile Solidarity spokesmen touring Europe are urging imperialism to take even further drastic measures. At a Glasgow meeting on 20 January a Solidarity speaker urged British workers to impose their own sanctions against Poland and called on imperialist banks to immediately call in all Polish debts so that the Polish economy will collapse.

Whilst Solidarity spokesmen whip up anti-Polish sentiment in Europe, thousands of Solidarity supporters are deserting socialist Poland and seeking refuge in fascist South Africa! The South African Embassy in Vienna has had more than 4,000 immigration applications from Poles who are 'seeking a new life in South Africa' and who in exchange for material comforts provided by apartheid will willingly

ingly participate in the oppression of black workers. What clearer evidence is there of the reactionary and pro-imperialist elements in Solidarity than its supporters going to join apartheid!

The imperialist campaign against socialist Poland and in support of Solidarity has been willingly joined by opportunists and middle class socialists of all hues and colours. British imperialism long ago recognised the use to which British trade unions could be put. In a 1959 Cabinet paper on policy in Africa it said:

'...trade union help will be needed to check irresponsible nationalisations and to maintain control of the key sectors of the economy in the newly created African states.'

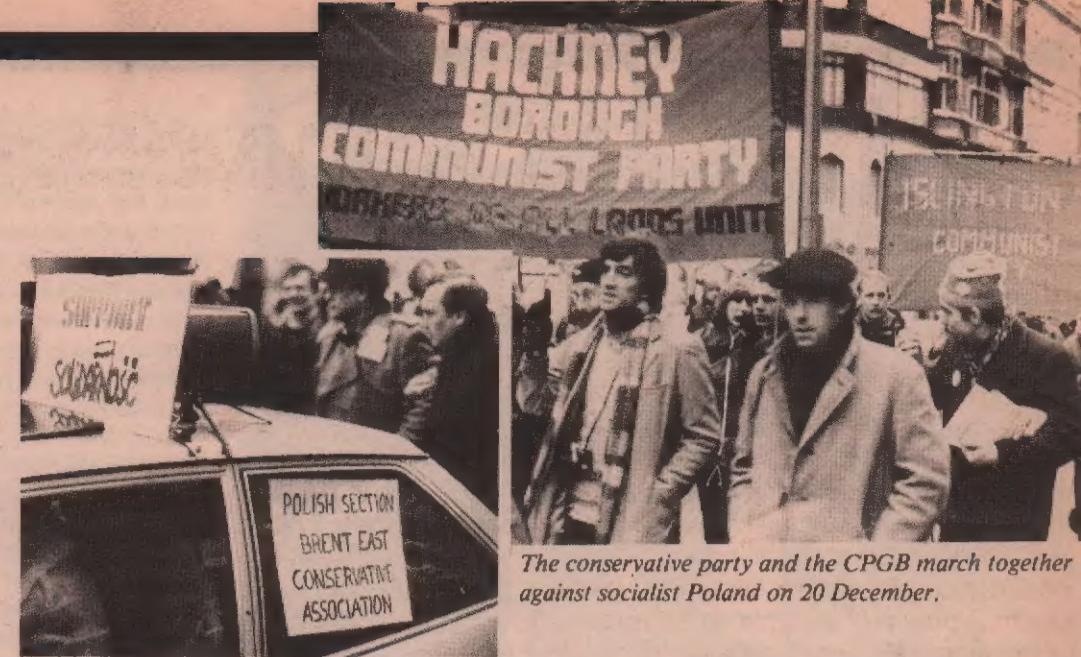
Today British trade unions are being put to use against socialism. Immediately after martial law in Poland, Terry Duffy, President of the AUEW, said:

'There should be no fraternal visits of any kind to Russia.'

These words come from the reactionary and racist Duffy, who not more than 5 months ago was preparing to visit South Africa there to lecture black workers on how to organise! Joe Gormley of the National Union of Miners had the gall to write to Lord Carrington claiming that Solidarity was:

'...only fighting for the things we take for granted in Britain – freedom and true democracy.'

The NUM is the very same NUM which sponsors Roy Mason MP who when Secretary of State for



The conservative party and the CPGB march together against socialist Poland on 20 December.

'Northern Ireland' proved notorious for his brutality. The NUM with 2.3 million shares in Brooke Bond, abstained on a motion at the company's last Annual General Meeting to raise the wages of plantation workers in Malawi who earn 19p a day. The TUC has not only given substantial help to Solidarity, but participated in the campaign to whip up working class hatred against socialist Poland while at the very same time it refuses to mount any effective sanctions campaign against South Africa, and indeed has £1/4m invested in companies trading or operating in South Africa.

The entire British Labour Movement has joined the imperialists in their attack on Socialist Poland. And in their wake, the entire British middle class left has done the same. On 20 December, the IMG, SWP, WRP, CPGB all joined the Labour Party, the Tory Party and even outright fascist organisations to march against socialist Poland. Since then their services to imperialism have been unceasing. *Socialist Worker* and *Socialist Challenge* filled their pages with attacks on the Polish government. Since 13 December they have devoted more space to Poland than they ever have for a similar period on Ireland or South Africa where British imperialism is directly involved in brutal and savage repression. The IMG's only criticism of imperialism was a criticism from the right. It declared imperialism *too soft* on Poland:

'The response of the imperialist powers has been equally predictable. "Strict non-intervention"

was how Lord Carrington described the Tories' approach. Similarly mild remarks were made by the Reagan administration.

The IMG has set itself the task to:

'...outgun the right in attacking the Polish Government ...'

The RCT-Party joined in the chorus:

'...the Polish army took over the running of Poland ... and launched a wave of terror against the Polish working class.'

and martial law is lyingly described as 'bloody repression' by the RCT-Party who have declared the socialist countries to be as reactionary as capitalist countries.

Communists in Britain denounce and reject the imperialist, opportunist and middle class socialist campaign against Poland. Imperialism, which is responsible for murdering hundreds of thousands of people, of reducing millions and millions of people to a life of poverty and suffering is today through its banks, its politicians, its press and trade union allies, trying to strangle the socialist countries. It is using Poland as its lynchpin. Communists condemn the waves of imperialist hypocrisy against socialist Poland and demand:

Imperialist Hands Off Socialist Poland!
Eddie Abrahams and Stephen Palmer

Pickets of imperialist banks

**Imperialist
Hands Off socialist
Poland!
Cancel all Polish
debts to
British Banks!**

Edinburgh

Barclays Bank
Thursday
11 February
St Andrews Square
5pm

Glasgow

Lloyds Bank
Friday 12 February
Corner of Hope
Street and Bothwell
Street
12.30-2pm

Leeds

Lloyds Bank
Friday 12 February
Corner of The
Headrow and
Vicar Lane
12.00-2pm

London

Barclays & Lloyds
Banks
Friday 12 February
Lombard Street
Meet Lombard
Street exit
Bank tube
at 12 noon

NCP SITS TIGHT

In the face of the reactionary imperialist campaign against Poland, the New Communist Party – self-proclaimed supporter of the socialist countries – has refused to act!

Last month the RCG wrote to the NCP proposing joint NCP/RCG pickets of imperialist banks to demand 'Imperialist Hands Off Socialist Poland! Cancel Poland's Debts to Imperialist Banks!' The NCP refused to even reply to the letter. General Secretary E. Trevett when challenged said the NCP was not supporting the pickets because the RCG was involved! The NCP's sectarianism did not however end here.

At a series of NCP public meetings around the country, the NCP went to extreme lengths to prevent FRFI supporters raising the question of practical assistance to socialist Poland. At most meetings only questions were allowed and meetings were abruptly ended to avoid discussion of the pickets on British banks. The most disgraceful case occurred in London when a black FRFI comrade was physically prevented from entering the meeting. FRFI protests at this were met by Eric Trevett rushing out to call the police. This racist and disgraceful act would not be tolerated in a communist movement. Despite NCP efforts to prevent it, an FRFI announcement of the picket on British banks in London received warm applause from sections of the audience at the London meeting.

Amongst the bogus arguments cooked up by NCP speakers when asked why they were refusing to support the pickets on imperialist banks were the following. The pickets, said the NCP, had not been

asked for by the Polish Communist Party and therefore constitute an interference in the internal affairs of Poland. What absurd nonsense. Do communists in imperialist nations have to wait for appeals from those desperately needing solidarity? The NCP's second gem was that socialist countries never renege on their debts. It is embarrassing to have to remind the NCP that we are not calling on Poland to do anything it considers ill advised. We are calling on British people to demand that British banks cease their bloodsucking operations in Poland. The NCP's final politically illiterate 'argument' was that the NCP supports peaceful co-existence. We reply with Che Guevara's communist explanation of peaceful co-existence:

'Peaceful co-existence among nations does not encompass co-existence between the exploiters and exploited, the oppressor and the oppressed.'

The NCP's fondness of an opportunist interpretation of peaceful co-existence is due to the fact that whilst calling itself socialist it wishes to peacefully co-exist with imperialism and its allies within the British Labour Movement.

First on Ireland and now on Poland, the NCP's sectarianism stands exposed. We urge NCP members appalled by this to reject their opportunist leadership and join the pickets we have organised on British banks on 12 February.

SWP – racist elements?

At a London SWP meeting, Anna Paczuska did her best to cover up Solidarity's anti-socialist programme.

She described the self-proclaimed anti-socialist dissidents who lead Solidarity as no more than 'gradualist' socialist intellectuals. Imperialist support for Solidarity was an unfortunate 'negative' factor. But according to the SWP it does have its 'positive' features. Anna Paczuska claimed that the:

'...right wing Polish community in Britain was now actively supporting a workers' movement.'

This active support(!) consisted of these people shouting 'Communist Scum! Death to Reds!' on the 20 December pro-Solidarity demonstration – which the SWP so enthusiastically supported.

When a black FRFI supporter pointed to the socialist countries' support for the African National Congress and asked why the ANC supported the socialist countries an SWP speaker retorted 'the ANC are as stupid as you are'. Outraged by such racist insults FRFI mounted a vigorous protest. Following the meeting SWP supporters continued vile racist attacks on the ANC, one of them declaring 'The ANC are tribal, they all come from Zulu land.'

This union of racist opposition to the ANC and support for pro-imperialist attacks on socialist Poland is no more than to be expected from the SWP. Any self-respecting socialist organisation would expel such elements. But the SWP welcomes such trash in its organisation.

IRAN: third anniversary of revolution

The following article was submitted to FRFI by the Moslem Students Society - Supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (MSS - Supporters of PMOI). The views expressed in the article are those of the MSS-Supporters of PMOI. We are however happy to publish it unedited so that British communists and workers can read the views of one of the mass anti-imperialist organisations in Iran. In line with our often stated policy of opening the pages of FRFI to revolutionary anti-imperialist organisations, we have invited and intend to print articles from other, communist, Iranian organisations expressing their views on developments in Iran.

Less than a month is left to the third anniversary of the heroic uprising of 11 February 1979, which overthrew the Shah's hated regime. This date acts as a reminder of the united, consolidated and armed uprising of the Iranian people and will undoubtedly remain as a great day in the history of the world. On the eve of the Shah's downfall, we possessed a united and solid popular front and triumph over the bloodthirsty Pahlavi regime was only possible through the continual unity of this front. Unfortunately, however, the Uprising resulted in the creeping power of another reactionary and anti-popular force (ie the criminal Khomeini and his savage gang), who misused the opportunity created by the weakness of the revolutionary forces, caused either by the Shah's blows or, as in the case of the Mojahedin, by the coup masterminded by the pseudo-left wing opportunists. The revolutionary forces thus lacked the capability to mobilise the masses of the people and did not come to power.

The reactionary regime, owing to its backward and decadent nature (historically and classwise) only cared about the preservation of its own interests and its reactionary reign. Day by day, the regime exerted ever greater pressure upon the Iranian people, the bulk of which was, naturally, being borne by the toiling strata of the society, particularly the workers, the peasants and the toilers in the towns. It deprived the women of their most basic human rights and subjected the ethnic and religious minorities (especially the heroic people of Kurdistan) to the most savage attacks. The criminal Khomeini, realising that the people's unity is the biggest obstacle on the path of putting his evil plans into action, took steps to destroy this unity from the very first day of his rule. His main tactic consisted of an all-out attack on one group, so as to make it an example for the others. Having dealt with one such group, he would move to the next. Thus, by making the minor contradictions of the society major, Khomeini managed to break up the people's ranks.

After the dismissal of Dr Bani Sadr, the President, Khomeini managed to consolidate his anti-popular reign. It was then the time for him to close in for the final elimination of the revolutionary and progressive forces threatening his regime.

As a first step he ordered his guards to open fire on the 500,000 strong mass demonstration of the people of Tehran on 20 June 1981. This demonstration was organised by the Mojahedin and because of the ruling repression, the crowds had to assemble at an hour's notice. Fifty ordinary people and Mojaheds were killed on that day. The next day Khomeini started his criminal executions.

It is worth noting here that the regime and the Western media pretend that the wave of executions by Khomeini's regime began as a result of bombings by the Mojahedin. This is a lie. The Khomeini regime started to suppress the Iranian people from the very beginning of its rule. He poured bombs and bullets on the Kurdish, Turkman, Baluchi, Arab and Turkish peoples and murdered seventy people belonging to the Mojahedin alone before 20 June 1981. Khomeini's savage suppression started at a time when he had become

extremely worried by his increasing isolation in society. Truly, how could such a regime possess a social base? A regime which has created more than 5 million unemployed, with no source of income, and 2 million war refugees living in worse circumstances than the prisoners of war; a regime which has brutally suppressed, bombed and massacred many of the four million Kurds, the one million Turkomans and the one million Arabs as well as millions of the ethnic and religious minorities. A regime which has raided the Universities and many schools in order to close them down, killing many students in the process. A regime which has deprived women of their rights, suppressed the striking workers, imprisoned and executed many traders. A regime which has purged, arrested and killed many teachers. A regime which has... how could such a regime have a massive social base? It is only the deceitful propaganda machine which converts the tens or hundreds or at the most thousands of pro-regime demonstrators into 'hundreds of thousands' and 'millions'. The sort of propaganda which is echoed by the Western media.

From 20 June onwards, Khomeini's repressive machine rolled on in order to violently eliminate all the revolutionary and progressive forces once and for all. It was at that point that the Mojahedin, as the main arm of the people and as the only organised mass organisation, took up arms in defence and began their heroic resistance. Now the battle of fate has started all over Iran.

The execution of more than 4000 of the people's best offspring, among them many aging men, pregnant women and young children, and the existence of more than 20,000 political prisoners living in the worst possible conditions and being subjected to horrendous tortures are the absolute proof of Khomeini's determination to annihilate all opposition. The Mojahedin's armed uprising against the regime was for the sake of saving the Revolution and the people in the face of Khomeini's massacres.

Today Khomeini is killing the very people whom the Shah wished to murder, but could not do so due to various reasons. The evident example of this fact is embodied in the execution of people like the 'Mojahed Mother',

Massumeh Shadmani, the 50 year old mother of six, who had been sentenced to execution on political charges during the Shah's rule. This was commuted to a life sentence and she was freed with the triumph of the people's revolt. In fact Khomeini's regime is finishing off the traitorous Shah's unfinished mission. So far he has killed 25 times as many Mojaheds as the Shah had done and holds five times as many political prisoners as there were under the Shah. Steadfastness against such an anti-popular and bloodthirsty regime must be accomplished by the united and consolidated ranks of the people, otherwise victory will be impossible. If the regime gains stability, the Iranian people will have to suffer more years of oppression and poverty under one of the most reactionary regimes in the world.

It was in response to this necessity that the National Council of Resistance was formed as the focal point for all progressive, revolutionary and nationalist forces and personalities, so as to unite the people's ranks against Khomeini's regime. This was a great triumph, for it was the first time in contemporary Iranian history that, according to the Revolution's necessities, those forces which together enjoy the greatest political, social and military backing, have laid the foundations of a genuine people's front in one of the most critical junctures of Iranian history. As the NCR was formed in response to such historical and social necessities, it has become increasingly more organised and consolidated along the path of struggle. So far many progressive and revolutionary forces and personalities have joined it. The Council was originally formed by the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran and the President, Dr Bani Sadr. Gradually, after the publication of the programme of the 'Provisional Government' of the 'Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran' (ie the future government formed by the NCR) the Council became more extensive. The affiliation to the NCR of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran as the major organisation and the most genuine representative of the Kurdish people has been an extremely important step on the way to establish the united people's front and to preserve national unity and integrity as regards the country and the struggle.

The NCR, as a democratic focal point with no goals other than the 'Freedom and Independence' of Iran, has, so far, attracted numerous revolutionary, progressive, nationalist and popular forces and personalities such as the various progressive political organisations, labour and student organisations, youth movements, jurists, economists, poets, writers, intellectuals, artists... but unfortunately listing them all is beyond the scope of this article.

Also many progressive political organisations, labour syndicates and unions, student bodies and prominent personalities throughout the world have announced their support for the NCR and the suggested programme of the future 'Provisional Government'. Their names have been, and will continue to be published in MSS publications.

The programme of the 'Provisional Government' of the 'Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran' is a comprehensive, progressive and democratic programme which meets the requirements of this period of the Iranian people's Revolution (ie the democratic anti-imperialist phase). The programme is fundamentally based on political and

economic independence; freedom of expression and ideology; the right to hold meetings and form parties and organisations; restoration of the rights of workers and peasants; social and political equality of men and women, guaranteeing a system of government based on the people's elected councils; restoration of the ethnic minorities' rights; social security and a genuinely non-aligned progressive foreign policy. In this respect it is one of the most comprehensive and progressive of the democratic programmes so far produced anywhere in the world. It is capable of satisfying the fundamental requirements of the people, particularly the toiling strata and classes of Iran.

Today the 'National Council of Resistance for the Independence and Freedom in the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran' is recognised as the most practicable and the most likely patriotic and popular alternative to Khomeini and is arousing the attention and support of the most genuine widespread internal forces as well as the democratic and independent forces on an international level. Those who wish to support the struggles of all the Iranian people and their genuine representatives as well as the revolutionary alternative accepted by the Iranian people, must defend the NCR and use whatever means available to introduce it to all the people of the world.

STOP THE JUNTA'S ATROCITIES! TURKEY

The veritable flood of angry and indignant protests by imperialist politicians and journalists against martial law in Poland have served imperialism in more ways than one. At a recent press conference, US Secretary of State Haig refused to answer a question about US support of fascistic dictatorships in El Salvador and Turkey. Haig had to refuse to answer the question. For hand in hand with imperialist attacks on socialist Poland disguised as 'support' for 'human rights' and 'freedom' is imperialist support for fascist regimes in the oppressed nations installed to crush and destroy democratic anti-imperialist and socialist forces. So while imperialism, in pursuit of counter-revolution in Poland raises the false flag of 'freedom' it remains silent about the murder, torture and concentration camps in Turkey. One cannot expect anything else from imperialism. The article below, submitted to FRFI by the Turkey Solidarity Campaign, exposes the extent of barbarism which imperialism and its lackeys are concealing with layer upon layer of anti-socialist propaganda about Poland.

Turkish Junta's savage record

The regime which seized power in Turkey on 12 September last year has established a savage record of repression and denial of human rights - and won the full backing of NATO, the IMF, and the governments of the West virtually without exception. The Junta's declared intention to 'return to democracy' has been taken as good currency, willingly, by the press who have colluded with the whitewash. The facts speak otherwise: no one in the labour movement, no democratic or progressive people, can ignore this repression or believe that it is a 'step on the road to democracy'.

As in Chile and Argentina, the IMF's monetarist policies have had to go hand-in-hand with brutal dictatorship. And we know from our own experience of monetarism, the effect of these policies is to decrease living standards and increase hardship. In a country like Turkey that means increasing poverty and malnutrition and suffering for working people. For a working population already subject to barbaric conditions of labour, the effects have been catastrophic.

The facts about the brutality of the Junta speak for themselves. Since the military takeover, 10 people have already been hanged, at least 82 people have died under torture, and over 600 have died in 'military operations'. The latest count of the number of people who have 'death sentences demanded against them by the military prosecutors now stands at 2449. Altogether over 120,000 political prisoners are being held in Turkish jails. Many of whose 'crime' was simply to belong to a trade union.

The recent jailing of Bülent Ecevit, the former Prime Minister and leader of the now banned Republican Peoples Party, for making a statement which was critical of the Junta, together with the death sentences demanded for the 52 leaders of the Progressive Trade Union Confederation DISK, must make it very difficult for the West to persist in its

description of the Junta as being 'democracy-loving'.

It is essential that solidarity work in this country should use these two events - the jailing of Ecevit and the opening of the DISK trials - as a lever to expose the face of the Turkish Junta and for the British labour movement to take a stand in defence of the labour movement in Turkey against the repression it is now suffering. Concrete solidarity action could include the blocking by trade unions here of all military and economic supplies to Turkey's dictators; supporting a delegation to observe the trials of the DISK leaders; participating in a campaign condemning the brutality of the regime, in particular the tortures and executions; protesting openly against the shameful alliance between the Thatcher government and the Turkish Junta.

The Turkey Solidarity Campaign is committed to building the solidarity movement in Britain. It is fighting for:

- An end to torture and capital punishment
- The release of all political prisoners
- The full freedom of all democratic institutions and organisations, including the trade unions, to organise and carry on activity in Turkey
- An end to the repression of the Kurds, and the suppression of Kurdish national rights. For the right of self-determination for the Kurdish people
- An end to military rule in Turkey/Turkish Kurdistan. An end to martial law and the special military courts set up to terrorise the masses. Solidarity with the Turkish and Kurdish masses in their struggle against the military Junta
- Opposition to NATO's reactionary role in Turkey
- An embargo on all shipments, military supplies and economic aid to the Junta.

Those wishing to support the work of the TSC should write to BM Box 5965 London WC1N 3XX for information.

SMASH APARTHEID NOW!

THE FREE STEVEN KITSON CAMPAIGN

News reached Red Lion Setters of Steven Kitson's arrest at about 4pm on Thursday afternoon, 7 January. Norma Kitson, together with those working at Red Lion Setters and other friends of the family, immediately decided to make maximum publicity about the arrest in order to secure Steven's release.

Telephone numbers of the press, political organisations, influential politicians were gathered together and a massive phoning operation began. The South African Embassy in London was phoned and information about the arrest was demanded. Every journalist contacted was additionally asked to ring the South African Embassy, not simply to get information, but primarily to make it clear that the news was out and the arrest was causing public concern.

The prime consideration at this stage was to create widespread publicity. Members of the RCG and supporters of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* played a central part in this work from the beginning. We all realised that only publicity offered a possibility of protecting Steven Kitson from the worst excesses suffered by prisoners of the racist South African regime.

Consular visit

This work continued on Friday and Saturday. AUEW/TASS and SATIS (South Africa - the Imprisoned Society) called a picket for the following Monday. Pressure was put on the British Foreign Office to take action, and was successful in that Steven Kitson was granted a consular visit on the Saturday.

After his visit the British consul told the South African press that Steven was 'physically healthy', but he reported to the family that Steven was 'dispirited and depressed as can be expected'. This was a rather complacent remark considering that it was later revealed that Steven had been interrogated non-stop for 24 hours, been maltreated and mentally tortured in solitary confinement. The consul had also interviewed Steven in the presence of his interrogators and was clearly aware of these facts.

It was in the next 24 hours, we now know, that Steven broke down under interrogation and told them the little information he had - the names of people he thought might be ANC members.

Frame-up

On Friday and Saturday the South African government began putting out press statements implicating Steven in a serious and bizarre charge of attempting to 'conserve the escape of convicted terrorists from the new prison in Pretoria'. The orders to do this, it was said, came from 'certain persons' overseas. A further 4 people were detained after Steven, one of whom was the brother of Tim Jenkin, a political prisoner who had escaped from Pretoria gaol in 1979. General Gedenhuys, Commissioner of the South African police, issued a statement which said they had reason to believe that these 'certain persons' overseas directing Mr. Khan, were also involved in the escape of the three political prisoners from Pretoria gaol in 1979.

Steven Kitson was being framed by the South African police for a supposed escape attempt in order to cover up their real reason for arresting and torturing him. Steven's father, David Kitson, is a political prisoner in South Africa and Steven is the only member of the immediate family who is able to visit him, and then only once a year. The South Africans knew that David Kitson, and

radio and LBC news. Great stress was continually being placed on the responsibility of the British press to publicise this case as much as possible, to protect not only Steven Kitson, but David Kitson and other political prisoners in South African gaols suffering similar and much worse treatment.

Release

On Tuesday afternoon the sensational news of Steven Kitson's release came when Joan Weinberg - Steven's aunt - phoned Norma. The campaign had achieved a great victory. The following

morning members of the Free Steven Kitson Campaign went to Heathrow to welcome Steven home. Another Press Conference was held and Steven told the British people of his horrifying ordeal.

The joy at his release was to be very short-lived. That evening the news of Joan Weinberg's murder was released. The South African regime had taken its revenge. It drove home to those involved that there will be no joy for the South African people until the racist South African state is overthrown.

David Reed

FREE ALL PRISONERS OF WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

David Kitson is one of 530 long term political prisoners in South Africa. 500 of them are blacks held separately from the whites on Robben Island - a small barren island guarding the approach to Cape Town harbour from which only one person has ever managed to escape. Being hundreds of miles from their families, and due to the persecution which visitors receive from the racist South African police, prisoners receive on average one visit every two years. In the prison they do such work as rock breaking and clearing seaweed. They are fed on thin maize meal and given only mats to sleep on. The prisoners include leaders of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe (Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki and others), leaders of the black consciousness movement, the PAC and some of the fifty Namibian prisoners on Robben Island (eg Toivo Hermann ja Toivo). Mandela is one of those serving life imprisonment, which means until death. When a 'life' prisoner dies he is buried in the prison grounds. There is no remission for South African political prisoners. Since 1978 the prisoners have had no study facilities as it was ruled in court that prisoners have no rights only privileges. They have no access to newspapers or radio.

South Africa has, per head of population, the highest level of imprisonment in the world (its nearest rival is the Six Counties of Ireland). Between mid-1977 and mid-1978 509,000 people were imprisoned in South Africa, mostly for infringements of the apartheid laws - pass laws, influx control, documentation control and trespassing. In consequence, some South African prisons are overcrowded by more than 200%.

More than 100 people a year are hanged (114 mid-1980 to mid-1981). At present the ANC are campaigning to save the lives of six ANC members sentenced to hanging. Many more die in police custody. Their deaths are normally attributed to 'suicide'. Steve Biko (the then honorary president of the Black People's Convention) was murdered in 1977. His death was attributed by South African 'Minister of Justice' J Kruger to a seven day hunger strike. In the face of widespread opposition this lie was withdrawn. Another example is the death in 1981 of another political detainee - Sifundile Matalasi. In their evidence to the inquest the police stated that Matalasi 'joined his pair of socks, tied them round his neck, tying the other end to the window. He then lay down on the floor, covering himself with a blanket, using the left arm to exert pressure and thus died of strangulation.'

In spite of this repression and vile brutality, resistance increases both inside and outside prison. The ANC are leading a campaign to win POW status for their captured fighters. Prisoners' protests inside have won minor concessions. This is accompanied by an escalation of their struggle to overthrow the racist apartheid state. In this they are urged on by their leaders in prison. A message from Nelson Mandela was smuggled out of Robben Island in 1980. It is entitled 'Unite! Mobilise! Fight On!' and declared:

'Between the anvil of united mass action and the hammer of the armed struggle we shall crush apartheid and white minority racist rule.'

It is this unbreakable determination and courage which guarantees the victory of the ANC. FRCI pledges its full support for the captured freedom fighters of South Africa.

**Victory to the ANC!
POW status for all South African political prisoners!**

Chris Fraser

STEVEN KITSON'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON THE DAY OF HIS RELEASE

I've been through a horrifying experience and I'm confused and tired.

I go to South Africa every year to visit my Dad - he comes out in '84 - and it was my aim to see him every year until his release and then help him. When I went out there this year I visited him a number of times and I also took some photographs of the outside of the prison. I did this so that my children could see what it was like to visit my father in gaol. Also while I was waiting for the warden to come and get me one visit - I had with me a notebook and pen, to write down what my father says - I was very bored and I made a sketch of the outside of the prison.

Because of these I was arrested on Thursday afternoon and taken to the Compol building in Pretoria.

The first thing that happened was they gave me a medical examination. I was terrified about this knowing how my mother and father were both mentally and physically tortured during their interrogations. This implied that they were going to be treating me very vigorously as well.

For the next 24 hours I can only describe my treatment as physical maltreatment and mental torture.

There was continuous interrogation for 24 hours, for most of which I had to remain in a standing erect position away from any wall or support. After 24 hours I was allowed a rest of half an hour on a bunk bed and then interrogation continued until supper time on Friday.

During the evening of Thursday, in order to keep me awake, I was told repeatedly that I had to remain awake and asked questions all the time. To keep me awake my face was slapped and I was vigorously shaken around.

At one stage the slapping got quite bad, so that my nose started to bleed, and the interrogator said to the other one that he had gone a bit too far and they paused and wiped my nose until it stopped bleeding.

And again, once he shook me so vigorously that my head hit the wall. Again he said to the other interrogator that he had gone too far.

So it was obvious that they didn't want to leave me with any marks or in a position where I could say I had been physically tortured.

Also to keep me awake they threw cold water all over me liberally. In the morning I was in a pretty sorry state and I had a whole bucket thrown over me.

To describe the mental torture would take longer but it basically consisted of a great number of threats. When the second interrogation team took over in the morning they threatened, if I didn't stand erect, instead of using cold water they would use boiling water.

They also said they were the 'nice' interrogators and there were plenty of worse ones around who would really bugger me up - beat me up.

They made it quite plain that it was very likely I would be in this state without sleep and stand vertically for a period of weeks. Also they indicated that I would be in detention for a limitless length of time and mentioned that my father had already been inside for 17 years and that my prison sentence would far outreach that.

The subject of the interrogation was that they claimed the photographs and sketches were part of a plot to get people inside the jail to escape - so much so that they just assumed this plot was present and demanded to know who was involved in this so-called plot and its details.

They took my notebook which I take to see my father and demanded to know intimate details of every person's name and address and whether they were involved at all.

On Friday evening I was put into solitary in Pretoria Central police station. The cell was a 15-20 feet cube with a fence of jail bars round the door, with another door in the fence. The small window was high up and covered in wire netting, and a toilet screened by a brick wall.

I was in total isolation except for occasionally hearing the screams of other black prisoners being beaten up.

The only really heartening thing at this stage was that other prisoners, especially those detained under section 6 of the Terrorism Act, had written on the walls things like: 'Don't fear, don't worry, you will soon get out'.



Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! contingent on the picket to Free Steve Kitson outside South Africa House.

As an aside, I think this is quite amazing. Many of these people having been caught trying to go across the border to get training, savagely beaten up – all of them. Some of them hanged presumably, the rest of them on Robben Island. They were writing to someone they would never meet: 'Don't worry, you'll be OK'. I took great heart by this.

As I remember the cell now, lying down on the bed, if I look past my feet I see two bricks with the words 'Don't worry' on them. My only worry now is that this is all a dream and I will wake up and past my feet I will see those two words again.

After the solitary confinement, the next morning, the previous pattern stopped and I was interrogated daily and in the evening sent back to solitary. The next day, I am not quite sure which day it was, the British consul visited me in prison.

Obviously he couldn't do much, but at this stage I was very relieved to hear of the press interest and the enormous interest people were holding in my case. This was very important to me indeed, because the whole purpose of the interrogation was to isolate me and get me to talk and crack. It heartened me a great deal that people were interested in my case.

During this second pattern of daily interrogation and nightly solitary there was also a change in the attitude of the interrogators, in that they stopped physical threats and stopped physical maltreatment and just continued with straightforward interrogation and threats.

The physical maltreatment stopped, but the mental torture continued. Looking back, I am convinced that this was because of all the fuss that was made by people outside. It was plain that at no stage did they want to leave me with physical marks or in any way I would say I had been physically manhandled.

What they were trying to do during the second stage was to get me to tell them information about my mother's activities in the ANC, to get me to tell them what little I knew.

I didn't want to tell them this, but on about the fourth day I broke and cried and mentioned names of two people I thought were involved.

During the whole procedure they said that according to the Act they had detained me under, I would only be released once I had provided them with an explanation of my actions which would satisfy the Commissioner of Police.

I told them that I had told the truth about the photographs and the sketch and they were not part of any plot whatsoever. But they didn't believe it. The truth and the statement to the Commissioner of Police wouldn't tally. They indicated that if this continued I would just remain there for ever.

One of the most important things about the whole business is not only what happened to me but also to tell you what I saw and heard. Because it is my view that is really the truth about South Africa today.

On my second night in solitary, I saw a man being admitted to the cells after being beaten up. Later on I heard him being savagely beaten again. He was very badly beaten, until finally his screams were like those of a three-year-old child. It was one of the most horrifying sounds I have ever heard.

Then the night before last, seven or eight people were being processed into the gaol, all of them under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. I think all of them were beaten up.

The thing I did see was the smallest of them who must have been no more than a boy, about 15 or 16. I was waiting in the lift to be taken up to my cell and I saw a warden smash this child across the face and kick his legs from underneath him so he fell very heavily on the concrete floor.

Without hardly any warning yesterday, I was released and taken to the airport and put on a plane.

I would like to thank people. I'm quite sure that my treatment was quite different to those normally detained in South Africa because of the pressure that was brought to bear on my case. So I would like to thank the press because I think their role in this was important. I don't think that I can ever thank the Campaign Committee enough for what they did. It is thanks to them that I am here now. And thanks to all friends and other people who have concerned themselves with my case.

My concern always has been with my father and unfortunately the goal I had to be there when he was released will now never be realised. I don't think I can ever return to South Africa in the present situation and I certainly don't think my sister should go either.

Steven Kitson, 25, a Rolls Royce Engineer was arrested at 4pm on 7 January after visiting his father David Kitson, a political prisoner in South Africa serving 20 years imprisonment for being an active member of the African National Congress.

David Kitson was 16 years old, when in 1935 he joined the Communist Party of South Africa. He became dedicated to the struggle for liberation in South Africa. At his trial he said of that period:

'As I grew up and came to think for myself, it became difficult for me to reconcile the oppression of the Blacks here with the philosophical outlook of the Western civilisation we whites purport to defend. Clearly the situation was contrary to the Christian tradition in which I had been reared. I came to accept the Marxist standpoint that mankind can only achieve its complete liberation with the achievement of communism.'

Below we print an interview with Norma Kitson which gives the background to David's arrest and imprisonment

FRFI: Although both you and David Kitson are South African, you met David Kitson in England in the 1950s. He won a trade union scholarship to Ruskin College, Oxford. Can you tell us about his experiences there?

Norma Kitson: While he was there he fought for the College to devote itself to training militant people for the labour movement. He could see that people who left Ruskin at the end of their courses were either becoming personnel managers and those type of jobs, or they were going on to further study and becoming academics. He thought this was defeating the main aim for which Ruskin was

formed. He thought they should go back onto the shop floor, better armed as workers to fight the capitalist system.

FRFI: David Kitson spent 2 years at Ruskin, what did he do after leaving Ruskin?

Norma Kitson: He got a job at BOC as a design draughtsman. He came up for promotion and was invited into his boss's office. At the time he was the shop steward of the union Draughtsman's and Allied Technicians Association which later became AUEW/TASS. He was told that in order to get promotion he would have to resign as shop

steward. He refused. He had no hesitation, he had no doubt about which side he was on. So he was sacked. Then he tried to get other jobs in the engineering industry but he was blacklisted. There was a lot of unemployment and the Union was weak then. Steven, our son was 18 months old so I couldn't work full time.

FRFI: You returned to South Africa in 1959 and David joined the ANC. What was the situation in South Africa at that time?

Norma Kitson: There were increasing and mounting attacks of brutality. All peaceful demonstrations were met with violence. There were mass removals to bantustans. They were implementing the Tomlinson Report, which was the master plan of apartheid. There were many incidents which culminated in Sharpeville, which was a peaceful demonstration against the pass laws. When people saw the police with guns they turned to run away, and 67 people were shot dead, most in the back, and hundreds were injured. It was a turning point. It showed the tremendous resistance that was there. David wanted to play a role in this resistance.

Up until 1961 there had been a policy of peaceful resistance in South Africa, because the leaders of the South African resistance had tried through every means in their power to negotiate a peaceful settlement. There came a time when they had no choice but to defend themselves. After a lot of discussion in the movement, the ANC formed the military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. They decided to fight back.

FRFI: David was arrested in 1964. What was the background to this arrest?

Norma Kitson: Over decades the policy of the South African regime had been to imprison or kill leaders of all the movements of resistance. In 1963 Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and some of the other leaders of the ANC were brought to trial, the Rivonia Trial. They were sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island. David was a member of the Technical High Command of the military wing and he formed part of the committee after these arrests.

David was arrested in June 1964 and the charges against him were the same as for the leaders arrested at Rivonia. Those arrested with him were Wilton Mkwai, ANC leader [sentenced to life], Mac Maharaj [12 years imprisonment], Lalo Chiba [18 years], John Matthews [15 years].

FRFI: What happened to David when he was arrested and detained?

Norma Kitson: I came home one day to find the house full of plain clothes police and Dave was very white but joky. They wouldn't tell me where they were taking him, they just took him away.

I contacted the newspapers and they said that the usual place where people were taken was Marshall Square. In South Africa relatives have to take in a meal every day to detainees. So I took David's meal down to Marshall Square. The next day I took another meal down and the other one was returned untouched.

In the middle of that night I got an anonymous phonecall from a man who said he had seen David at the Greys – the Johannesburg interrogation centre. David was being questioned, he had had cold water thrown over him and had been made to stand for 36 hours. He said that David was in a very bad way.

So the next morning I rushed out and bought four tomatoes and went to the Greys, which is a heavily guarded building. I said that I was Lieutenant Venter's wife (Venter is a very common name in South Africa) and that he had been interrogating 'these terrorists' for hours and that I thought he needed something to eat. They escorted me up to either the sixth or seventh floor, I don't remember which. They let me out of the lift. There were a lot of doors so I went to one and opened it and I had a glimpse of a black man sitting on the edge of a brown wooden desk, covered in blood. I quickly closed the door and opened the door on my left. I saw David for seconds, standing looking dreadful, then the door was slammed on me. Two security policemen then escorted me out of the building.

FRFI: Dave was held initially for 90 days, what happened during this period?

Norma Kitson: We weren't allowed to visit and he wasn't allowed access to a lawyer and exactly a month after his arrest, on 22 July I was arrested and put in solitary confinement for 28 days. After the 90 days detention David was just redetained, he

continued on page 3

APARTHEID MURDER

Joan Alison Weinberg, my aunt, was brutally murdered by the South African fascist regime on Wednesday 13 January. Only hours after my brother's release was secured by the Free Steven Kitson Campaign, my father's link with the outside world was murdered.

There is no doubt that my brother's detention and torture was linked to the murder of my aunt. They were both part of the latest series of sadistic manoeuvres to isolate and demoralise my father, David Kitson who was sentenced to 20 years incarceration for being a member of the ANC.

The problem for the South African regime is the cover-up. First they tried to brush it off by implying that my aunt had committed suicide. They said she was slumped over a blood-filled bath and that her wrists were slashed. However, only hours before her murder she had been overjoyed at the news of my brother's release. My mother has a tape of her phoning the 'wonderful news' through to London. She also saw my brother off at Jan Smuts Airport, and he describes her mood as ecstatic.

The following report said her wrists were damaged, her jaw was broken, that some of her teeth had been knocked out, that she had other severe head injuries, and that it was being treated as a murder inquiry. Later the police said that an imminent arrest was expected. This arrest did not materialise. They were playing for time.

A pathology report promised on Monday 18

Repression in Guatemala

eyewitness account

This eyewitness account of repression and revolution in Guatemala was given exclusively to FRI by a journalist recently in Guatemala.

We flew into Guatemala City from San Salvador and our first impression of Guatemala City was very pleasant. Unlike San Salvador there's no curfew so you could wander freely at night. The restaurants are full, the bars are full, lots of traffic in the streets and an apparent surface air of complete normality. So we were very relieved. We thought we might be able to relax a bit.

The following morning we got the newspapers and we began to read exactly the same things that we had read in the papers in San Salvador. And it was clear immediately that the level of killing was just as high as it is in El Salvador. There is an amazing newspaper that comes out twice weekly which is devoted entirely to large full, half, quarter page photos of bodies, people who died in the last 2 or 3 days. Now some of those are just traffic accidents or ordinary fatalities, but probably about two thirds are people who have been killed by the army or the police. In the first edition we saw, there were photos of a number of peasants, men and women, probably 12, who had been killed in a village fairly near Guatemala City. We certainly realised that that was very much the same situation as that in El Salvador. The fact that this all occurred in an atmosphere of apparently greater freedom and liberty and relaxation in Guatemala City made this all the more threatening.

I think that was the horror of Guatemala – it was in the end a far more frightening place to be in than El Salvador. You begin to realise that literally on every street corner, there are innumerable grades of police both uniformed and non-uniformed, all of them heavily armed, and they walk around in ones or twos throughout Guatemala City. There are large numbers of American pick-up trucks that rattle around with plain clothes police and army carrying sub-machine guns. When you start seeing a lot of those rattling around the city centre you begin to realise that really you could get shot on a street corner without warning and without repercuSSION.

Another thing that brought the reality home very quickly to us was something that happened in Guatemala City. We were trying to get in touch with a woman who was involved in human rights work. She was a Catholic, as most of the human rights workers are, and was qualified as a teacher. Her father had been a high ranking functionary in the government and had retired. They lived in a middle class area of Guatemala City and she and her father were driving into work one morning, two days after we arrived. As they got to a crossroads just round the corner from their house two unmarked pick-up trucks pulled up in front of them with a whole load of heavily armed men in plain clothes. She was shot where she sat in the back seat. Her father was taken away and presumably tortured and shot. I don't think he's ever been seen again. And that's an example of the extent of the repression – it's not just things that go on in distant

parts of the countryside between the peasants and the army, it reaches into the heart of Guatemala City. The police and the army are very efficient and very ruthless as regards even the top people. Catholic bishops are scared silly of being killed.

Revolutionary priests and the Catholic church

I think the reasons why the bishops are scared silly is because they keep getting tarred with the brush that is applied to the priests, the lay Catholic workers, the nuns and monks in the remote country areas.

In the last 2 years there have been probably about 1 or 2 dozen priests who have been murdered in the areas where they work by the Guatemalan military. We went to Quiche province which is a bit north-west of Guatemala. It's an area with a very dense indigenous population of Indians of Mayan descent and it's an area where the guerillas have a very strong foothold particularly the EGP, that's the 'Guerilla Army of the Poor' which is one of the strongest and more recent guerilla movements. It does contain a large Catholic element although it has a socialist programme.

A lot of the mainly Jesuit priests who became involved in the land reform programmes and self-help and cooperative programmes in areas like the Quiche inevitably became sympathetic and came in touch with the guerilla movements. And because of their declared policy toward popular movements against oppression, were seen as allies of these movements. They were the only public spokespeople for the peasants who could be quoted in newspapers and particularly have a link with the outside world. And that's why so many of the priests have been killed. The aim has been to kill the most active ones and to try and scare the others so that they all leave the country.

We went to the main town in Quiche province which is Chichicastenango, a large market town high up in the mountains and it has a large church that dominates the market square. There were 3 Jesuit priests who worked in villages surrounding Chichicastenango who would come in on Sundays to read the large mass, and they would make openly political speeches from the pulpit. They were heavily involved in helping the peasants organise themselves against the exploitation and the land seizures that were a feature of a lot of these larger areas – the military coming in and taking over the land that had belonged to the communities for centuries. They were all killed within a 6 month period,

starting in late 1980 and finishing, not that it has finished, in the summer of 1981. We visited the graves of 2 of them in the cemetery – people still go and put flowers on the graves and light candles.

Guerilla Army of the Poor

The town of Hoyabadj which is about 80 km east of Chichicastenango in the province of Quiche, is in the heart of an area fiercely contested by guerillas, mainly the EGP, and the army. It's a classic situation where the army holds the major towns and roads for periods of time and maintain a presence in the smaller towns and villages, but where the guerillas are very numerous and mount road blocks quite often to stop and shoot up army vehicles. Also, they have a tactic where they come into a town, hold it for a day and hold public meetings, protected by their soldiers. They will also deal with people in the town who are known to be collaborating with the army and people who are part of the repressive apparatus.

The week before we arrived, the EGP had taken over Hoyabadj for the day and had shot the mayor and the chemist. It's worth knowing something about the mayors in these towns – it's probably wrong to call them mayors – they're not elected. Their full name is 'military commissioner'. The areas are run by military governors so it's not surprising that they are the targets for execution by the guerilla groups. So this governor had been shot and the chemist who had been known to be a collaborator and had informed on a number of people, had also been shot. Several weeks after that, the army came into this town in force and rounded up about 30 of the villagers in the centre of the town and shot them all dead. That is the sort of thing that occurs in these heavily contested areas where the guerillas have a major presence. The army is unable to control the area all the time so what they do is move in force from one village to another and carry out reprisals because it's known that the villagers support the guerillas.

The road to Santiago de Atitlan, where the priest died, goes through a large market town called Solola which is the capital of the province of the same name. It's where the military governor of the province is based, with a barracks and a large police force. About a couple of months after we were there the EGP took over part of the town for several hours and executed the military governor and a couple of senior military personnel. That shows how effective they are – they can actually enter the provincial capital where the military command is based and reach the governor in his office and execute him. While that may produce a reaction from the military in terms of more people getting killed, you can imagine on the other hand what it does for the morale of the peasants in the area, if they know that even the top military can't escape execution.

Junta genocide and land robbery

Earlier in 1980 in the same area in Quiche, in a remote village, the army rounded up all the 130 men from the village. It was only a short time previously that quite a large part of the land that belonged to the village community had been taken over by somebody connected to the army. This is a common occurrence: the army moves in, takes over the land, then distributes it to politicians, army people or even foreigners who will obviously pay them a considerable backhander. The men from the village were lined up in the village square and asked: which of you is going to denounce the patron, that's the landowner, the boss. Which of you is a communist and is going to denounce this man? They were taunted like this for a while and when none of them replied, the leader of the army patrol said: we know you're all communists so we're going to shoot you anyway. So they shot all of them with machine guns – 130 of the men on the spot. Some of their children were watching and when they began to cry as they saw their fathers falling on the ground, the army turned on them and a number of children were shot as well. And that is just one of the cases that were actually reported in areas controlled by the military.

The repressive apparatus is very well organised in Guatemala – it has been since 1954 when the American marines went in and overthrew the popular government, and it will take longer therefore to reach some kind of victory. The rate of killings shot up dramatically recently so you have to assume that it will carry on for a long time and that's a very frightening prospect. It is virtually a policy of genocide against the indigenous Indian population because they're the ones who most fiercely resist the military regime.

LATIN AMERICA IN BRIEF

El Salvador

- Imperialist genocide and popular resistance

On 11 December, the US trained Atlacatl brigade entered the village of Mozote, separated the men, women and children and proceeded to shoot them down. 472 of the 500 villagers were killed. At the beginning of January 1,600 junta troops arrived in the USA to receive further training in murder, and on 28 January President Reagan announced that El Salvador satisfies the US Congress's human rights requirements and announced an increase in military aid.

The FMLN has responded to this policy of genocide by stepping up its revolutionary war. On New Year's Day revolutionary units dynamited power stations and electricity lines leaving the entire country in darkness. In the next four weeks the FMLN extended its war of economic sabotage by the destruction of trucks carrying sugar and the derailment of a train transporting agricultural machinery. Then on 27 January, in a spectacular military operation FMLN guerillas raided the military airport in San Salvador and destroyed a number of aircraft. The revolutionary war against the barbarous fascist regime has, despite junta terror and genocide, grown stronger. The US ambassador to El Salvador stated on 13 January: '...the initiative of the war has passed to the guerillas'.

Haiti

- From horror of Haiti to concentration camps in USA

Over 2500 refugees from Haiti are now being held in concentration camps in the USA and US occupied Puerto Rico. Black and progressive organisations in the USA have organised massive demonstrations demanding that the Government grant political asylum to the refugees. The first of these demonstrations were on 19 December in Puerto Rico, Washington and New York. Then on Christmas Day 1981, 711 Haitian prisoners in Miami went on hunger strike demanding political asylum. Their supporters on the outside blocked the streets of Miami for three days and on 27 December 700 of them invaded the concentration camp and despite tear gas and club wielding police tore down the fences allowing 160 prisoners to escape. At huge public meetings which followed special attention was drawn to the hypocrisy of the US 'concern' for 'human rights' in Poland whilst denying basic rights to Haitian refugees.

Meanwhile, in spite of constant US Navy patrols, small groups of guerillas are beginning to enter Haiti to commence armed struggle to overthrow the barbaric Duvalier regime.

Tourism and revolution

The tourist industry, which is mainly for Americans, has dropped so dramatically in the last 2 years – it's dropped to about 20% of its former level. So the official tourist ministry, some time last year, paid for a group of American tour operators who thought they might want to operate in Guatemala to come down to Guatemala and put them up in the best hotels in Guatemala City. They sent them off in a bus to Chichicastenango which was a market town that the tourists used to frequent – just to show them that tourists could go there and there would be no problem. About half way there as they went through quite a hilly area, the coach was flagged down by this group of heavily armed men in civilian clothes. The tour operators were told: 'Don't worry, these are no doubt members of our security forces – see how vigilant they are, they're here to check things are OK. Don't worry if they ask you to get out and search you – you'll see how efficient the Guatemalan armed forces are.' So they all were asked to get out of the bus. However suddenly one of the armed men flung a can of petrol over the bus and set the whole thing alight. It turned out that they were members of the EGP who were mounting one of their regular shows of strength. It's reported that although the tour operators were urged to continue their journey by alternative transport, a large straggle of very agitated American tour operators were to be seen hitching lifts from anything with two wheels that moved to get back to Guatemala City as fast as they could. And it has to be reported that the level of tourists in Guatemala continues to fall.



NOTES & COMMENTS

■ French immigrant workers

The French Socialist Government's campaign to 'regularise' the status of all immigrants ended on 31 December. All immigrants illegally resident in France had to receive their permits by that date or be deported. Out of an estimated 3,400,000 immigrant workers, only about 100,000 applied in this way. Of these less than 16,000 received their permits! So much for a 'socialist' solution to 'the immigrant problem'!

Many workers put up a militant struggle for their work contracts and permits, but were attacked from all sides. Some of those who won work contracts through strikes and occupations suddenly found their firm had moved to another area and they were fired. Others were beaten up and terrorised by security guards employed by the bosses. Even more were confused by the divergence of political forces taking the lead in this attack. The Socialist Trade Union (CFDT) and those left groups supporting the Mitterrand government, tried to prevent the development of any aspect of the struggle confronting the state's immigration policy. They try to justify deporting penniless workers to countries pillaged and bankrupted by imperialism with convoluted arguments about the good intentions of the 'socialist' government.

In satirical papers Mitterrand is called 'Tonton' - 'Uncle' - as his mask of benevolence never cracks on the TV set. He turns a different face however towards the thousands of immigrants who are being hounded in ID card inspections, exploited for starvation wages in illegal work, herded into slum hostels and finally deported. There is no such thing as a humane and caring imperialist state. When will the 'left' apologists for Mitterrand in France and in Britain learn this lesson?

Sheila Marston

■ Mitterrand and Algeria

A lot has been made of President Mitterrand's recent discussions with Algeria. His supporters are full of praise for his 'understanding' and 'caring' qualities towards the 'Third World'. But a closer look reveals Mitterrand simply taking care of imperialist France's interests. In return for 'helping' Algeria with its building programme he demands draconian police measures from the Algerian state to prevent further 'illegal' emigration. All those, desperate for a job, who have up to now visited France as tourists and stayed on without the necessary permits, will now be stopped before they even leave Algeria. If they manage to get through, the Algerian and French police's new cooperation will ensure they are sent back speedily. Mitterrand claims these measures will ensure a better life for those immigrants already living in France. That is just demagogic - just as here in Britain, immigration controls mean racist harassment and oppression both at the ports and airports and throughout the country.

Sheila Marston

■ Capitalist Class have better teeth - Official

The *Financial Times*, the Capitalist's Own Paper, recently carried a report under the headline 'Life has never been so good - or so bad'. The report surveyed the latest issue of *Social Trends*, an annual government compilation of information and statistics.

Social Trends has its uses - although at £20 a copy it is still losing money and may be discontinued. The latest issue reveals just what life is like for a worker in Britain with the economy never quite 'bottoming out' as the Government persistently predicts.

It will come as no surprise to see confirmed that the jobless rate for young workers doubled between 1979 and 1981. And of course the sharp rise in overall unemployment has particularly hit immig-

rants from the West Indies, East Africa, Pakistan and Bangladesh. They suffered almost double the average unemployment rate. Meanwhile the hospital waiting list rose from 604,000 in 1966 to 809,000 in 1979, although this is of no concern to those able to buy a private bed ahead of this ever-lengthening queue.

Britains' unemployed youth, blacks and Asians, and those on hospital waiting lists will be especially pleased to hear that *Social Trends* has officially confirmed that their boss class now has better teeth. The *Financial Times* smugly summarised the 'good life' increasingly enjoyed by the capitalist class; 'we live longer, have more to spend, have better teeth, smoke less, and we take longer holidays than 10 years ago'.

Brian Fox

■ Abortion rights - renewed attack

Since it was passed in 1967, the Abortion Act has survived several attempts in Parliament to undermine it - the last was the Corrie Bill, 1980. The Government has now simply bypassed Parliament in another serious attack on women's rights. It should be said that the right to have a legal and safe abortion in Britain today simply does not exist. A woman has to find two doctors willing to sign the 'green form' before she can legally have an abortion. Women are frequently turned away by the NHS and have to pay anything up to £200 - £300 for a private operation.

An amended form introduced by the DHSS as an 'administrative' measure in March 1981, now effectively means that a third doctor, the surgeon, must state the medical 'justification' for the operation. 'Social grounds' are no longer accepted on this form. So surgeons who sign the form but refuse to invent 'medical' reasons face prosecution, and at least one leading pro-abortion doctor is now being investigated by the police. For many doctors, particularly in the NHS sector, this will be the excuse they are waiting for to refuse to do any more abortions. More and more women will have to pay for private abortions, if indeed they can afford it.

The extent of this latest attack on abortion rights is shown by the fact that in 1978, 120,000 out of 140,000 needed the operation on social grounds. The figure is bound to remain at least at this level: for with more and more workers and unemployed now living well below the poverty line, women increasingly face no 'choice' at all; many who wish to have a child simply cannot afford it.

The attack on abortion rights must be opposed as part and parcel of the defence of democratic rights. In attacking women's rights the state is attempting in yet one more way to subjugate the working class by withdrawing access to abortion for women in Britain.

Tony Sheridan

■ NUS backs Stickies

The Stickies (Sinn Fein the Workers Party) having been totally rejected in Ireland, most recently in the Fermanagh/South Tyrone by-election, demonstrated yet again their slander and sectarianism. The recent National Union of Students conference at Blackpool fell for the Stickies' slander against Owen Carron MP who was due to address the conference.

The Stickies claimed that he was responsible for the murder, torture and oppression in Ireland as he supported the Republican Movement. Having heard this rubbish, the delegates, obviously easily influenced, voted to stop Owen Carron from speaking.

Brendan Hearey from the Six Counties, under the cover of 'Students for Peace and Democracy in Ireland' (!) delighted by this, later claimed that the Provos tipped off the Special Branch when Owen Carron was refused permission to speak. This, he says, resulted in four people (Hearey

included) being arrested under the PTA. He also claimed that the way the PTA is used drives people into the hands of the IRA.

If Hearey's logic is to be taken seriously, then the Provos in Britain have been very busy, making over 5,000 tip offs to the Special Branch since 1974. Being totally without a voice in Ireland (except for one seat in Cork) and having been rejected by the Irish NUS two years ago, the Stickies now hope to influence the British NUS. Their prospects look good, judging by the (lack of) reaction to the IRSP students arrested before Christmas under the PTA. But then these British students follow the logic of 'British socialists' and that never ceases to amaze me.

Cathal

■ 550 prisoners chained in Britain

It is not surprising to read (*Daily Mirror* 2 October 1981) that the British imperialist state is increasingly shackling prisoners. 'Prisoners who don't obey orders are being shackled in their cells. They are made to wear belts with handcuffs attached so that they cannot feed themselves or hit out. Leather thongs are strapped around their ankles which allow them only to hobble.' The leather thongs attached to the ankles have been known to cut into the flesh inflicting great pain and misery on the prisoners.

These disgusting 'methods of keeping prisoners in line' are admitted by the Home Office to be on the increase. The 1980 figure was 524 men and 26 women. These shackles and handcuffs are designed to break the spirit of prisoners whilst taking away their dignity. In the recent past other methods of subjugating prisoners, such as the liquid cosh - the tranquilising injection Largactil - were used more. But now a more openly harsh prison regime has come into action. So those arrested during and after the fightback are having to face this more openly brutal treatment in borstals and prisons. The majority of these are black.

The British state is starting to carry out similar treatment of its prisoners to the fascist regime in South Africa. Britain has reverted to the barbarism which it taught fascist regimes throughout the world in oppressing the working people.

Rohan

■ Labour imperialists back Brooke Bond

Brooke Bond is hated throughout the world for its barbaric oppression of the 40,000 workers on its tea plantations in India, Kenya and Malawi. In 1980 it was revealed that Malawi workers were earning 19p a day whilst Brooke Bond profits rose from £38 million to £42 million. Profit from Brooke Bond; slum housing, low wages, high rates of anaemia and infant mortality for the tea workers.

At the last AGM of Brooke Bond shareholders the backing of Labour imperialists for imperialist exploitation and oppression was once again revealed. The World Development Movement proposed a motion to oblige Brooke Bond to improve the wages and conditions of the plantation workers. Shareholders such as Labour-controlled West Midlands County Council (1.5 million shares) were expected to announce the sale of all their shares if the motion was defeated. In the event the motion was defeated. The NUM pension fund (2.3 million shares) abstained on the motion.

The West Midlands County Council has taken no steps to sell its shares. Other major shareholders include the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society and the London Borough of Camden. All these Labour-controlled or TU-controlled bodies are sharing in the loot stolen from Third World workers. These bodies stand directly responsible for the death, starva-

tion and misery imposed on the plantation workers.

When will Arthur Scargill withdraw NUM support for Brooke Bond? When will the left 'transformers of the Labour Party' withdraw Labour support for Brooke Bond? When will the CPGB which sits on the London Co-operative Society Political Committee put an end to the support of the Co-op for Brooke Bond?

TM

■ Open letter to Arthur Scargill

Dear Arthur Scargill,

According to a recent press report the NUM pension fund owns 2.3 million shares in Brooke Bond and at the last AGM of Brooke Bond shareholders, abstained on a motion to raise wages and conditions for the workers on Brooke Bond tea plantations in India, Kenya and Malawi.

You must be aware of the well-publicised conditions imposed on third world workers on Brooke Bond plantations: starvation wages (19p per day in Malawi in 1980); slum housing; primitive or non-existent health care; high rates of anaemia and infant mortality. The lives of these workers and their children are being sacrificed to the profits of Brooke Bond. The NUM pension fund, by holding 2.3 million shares, is directly participating in the brutal exploitation and oppression of these workers, and is sharing in the loot stolen from third world countries by imperialism.

We therefore ask you to: 1) explain why the NUM pension fund did not support the motion to improve the wages and conditions of the tea plantation workers; 2) to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the immediate sale of all Brooke Bond shares held by the NUM pension fund.

Yours fraternally,

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!

■ Labour imperialism 1951

The New Year brought the censored release of the 1951 Cabinet papers. 1951 saw Britain busily 'destabilising' countries such as Iran and Egypt which were nationalising their natural resources at the expense of imperialist firms. The Labour Party, in power at the year's outset, planned and laid the groundwork for much that the Tory government of November 1951 continued.

The Labour government was actively suppressing liberation struggles such as that in Malaya. Notable omissions from the released papers conceal Labour's ruthless suppression of the Malayan liberation movement. The Labour Cabinet, led by Herbert Morrison, Gaitskell and Attlee, also discussed the necessity of military action against the democratically elected Mussaddiq government of Iran which had decided to take over assets of the Anglo-American Oil Company. Gaitskell said: 'The economic effects of our losing control over Persian oilfields could hardly be overestimated.' A train of events followed which led to an imperialist-inspired toppling of the democratic Mussaddiq government and the installation of the USA/Britain-backed Pahlavi regime.

The Labour Cabinet's minutes also disclose that Labour scuttled measures on equal pay for women, even those of a purely cosmetic nature: a plan to 'phase-in' equal pay over 18 years! It was in 1951 that the Labour government destroyed the principle of a free National Health Service by introducing dental and spectacle charges in the 1951 budget, despite the fact that it was the very same government which established the NHS in 1947!

The truth of the matter is that the Labour Party has always been imperialist and anti-working class, every bit as pro-imperialist and anti-working class in its 1945-51 form as in its present form.

Tony Sheridan

POLICE FILE

● Police confessions

A recent report by two academics into police and court procedure found that for the police, confessions were 'the most convenient means of gaining convictions' and that they were prepared to go to 'extraordinary lengths to secure a conviction, even to buttress weak and inconclusive evidence against a suspect with manufactured verbal admissions'. Or in plain language, to go to any lengths of threats and brutality to extort a confession.

● Police Perjury

Perjury is another method favoured by police to get a false conviction. York PC Peter Harney, 35, for example, swore on oath that he had made entries in his notebook immediately after two interviews with a man charged with a motoring offence. So Harney had to plead guilty to a perjury charge when it was discovered that he had in fact torn papers from another notebook and inserted them into his own. But PC, or rather ex-PC Harney got off very nicely thank you with a six month suspended sentence.

● DPP Miracles

And PC Adrian Webb perjured himself with complete immunity last November when he claimed to have arrested Majit Singh Semhi at Southall, only for it to be discovered that at another trial he had claimed to have arrested another man at exactly the same time a considerable distance away (see FRFI 14). Yet the Department of Public Prosecutions believes in miracles! It accepts PC Webb's story that he was in two places at once and is taking no action against him.

● 2p damages

18 year old James Ambrose was butted in the face by Liverpool PC David Kelly when he went to fetch his dog. Two police approached him, told him he had a 'big mouth' and one, PC Kelly, butted him in the face. In court a jury found Kelly guilty of assault and wrongful arrest - but awarded damages of only 2p to James Ambrose!

● PC robs police station

Ex-PC Laine Gatier, 25, was gaoled for two years for robbery, burglary and taking a car. Gatier claimed to have suffered a personality change after being beaten up when in the police force (surely some mistake here?). Desperate for drugs, he broke into his former police headquarters where he expected to find some in the training school. Finding none he stole a sawn-off shotgun and used it to hold up a shop. Like most police he found it difficult to go straight after leaving the job.

● Promotions for playboy

The New Year has brought some changes to London's policeforce with a number of 'promotions'. In one of them Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Scotland Yard, 59 year old Peter Neivens, is to become director of the Playboy gambling organisation. FRFI readers should not be surprised at this change of job. For in Neivens own words: 'I have lived my life in a certain way and at a very early age I learned certain principles. I'm not going to depart from them now. I'm just there to do a job based on my experience. Come on salary, it'll be around £60,000.'

MORRIGAN



● Murder and Repression in 26 Counties

During the months of December and January, Free State garda had to resort to methods that culminated in the death of one of their detainees.

For national schoolteacher Mr T O'Sullivan the ordeal began when he was arrested by gardai and held in a tiny Co. Cork village for questioning under the Offences Against the State Act. Within hours of his release Mr O'Sullivan was dead. The bourgeois media responded mutedly to the embarrassment but refrained from calling for an independent inquiry or indeed any form of punishment of the offender(s).

While the state turned a blind eye at the murder there was no concealing the presence in the 26 Counties of a number of IRA volunteers who staged a dramatic escape from Her Majesty's Crumlin Road concentration camp last June. Last month two of the escapers Robert Campbell and Michael Ryan received ten year jail terms at the Special Criminal Court under the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act 1976 for their part in the armed escape.

A subsequent two prisoners have been arrested on the same escape charge. Paul Magee and Anthony Sloan were arrested on the 6 January and 4 January respectively, the former in the south westerly town of Tralee the latter in the city of Cork. Both men have been remanded until the 21 January when a report of their comrades' case is expected, with RUC men and Gardai scratching each other's back in presenting decisive oral 'evidence'.

● The SDLP and Jim Prior's initiative

The SDLP is ready and willing to participate in any Six County constitutional arrangement that British imperialism devises so long as its allocation of the crumbs of power is sufficiently large, to sell as 'real minority participation'. That was the clear message coming from John Hume at his meeting with Northern colonial chief Jim Prior of 11 January, and afterwards by him in an RTE radio interview the following Sunday.

Prior's latest proposals, a slightly varied rehash of the so-called power-sharing notion that proved inoperative in 1974, envisage a two-tier system, consisting of an Assembly and an Executive. The Executive would be headed by a Secretary of State, Prior, who would appoint ministers coming from inside or outside the Assembly. The Assembly itself would have its own prescribed powers.

The whole purpose of this elaborate scheme (combining integration with devolution), is to divide the Nationalist community by drawing the Catholic middle class into the role of running and defending the loyalist state. In this way the imperialists hope to isolate the IRA/INLA through alienating their mass support.

There is a good likelihood that a number of middle class loyalists will support the proposals, assuming they are finalised with a structure resembling the present. Nevertheless organised middle class loyalism (OUP) will be inclined to test the pulse of petit-bourgeois loy-

alism (DUP) and any hysteria it might engender before staking its party credibility for or against.

On the nationalist side, however, there can be no room for doubt. The SDLP has shown itself a completely degenerate and opportunist party, with the interests of the oppressors of the nationalist working class at heart. It must be expelled totally from the ranks of the nationalist working people now.

● CPI Opportunism

The hopelessly reformist and opportunist nature of the CPI defies concealment even at times of death. It was quite in order then for the CPI General Secretary Michael O'Riordan to deliver an appreciation of recently deceased Betty Sinclair which served up a usual quota of anti-Republican propaganda and distortion.

According to O'Riordan, the IRA bombing campaign deepened the sectarian division of Catholic and Protestant workers in the Six Counties. By maintaining the war of national liberation, the IRA contribute to the success of Britain's 'divide and rule' policy. The 'correct' method of achieving Irish unity is to work towards uniting Orange and Green workers behind the banner of the 32-County Socialist Republic.

What O'Riordan omitted to say was that imperialist Britain has always looked on the loyalist class alliance as the only bulwark to maintain partition and imperialist exploitation throughout Ireland. The loyalist class alliance itself could only be held together by a network of material privileges and discrimination against Catholics institutionalised by the Northern State. IRA action against the state therefore exposes the acuteness and the contradictions of an existing sectarian division, which it undermines by undermining British imperialism and the very stability of the Northern State.

In claiming that the war of national liberation promotes sectarianism, the CPI envisages a progressive role for British imperialism in the true traditions of their reactionary politics.

Morrigan

DUNDEE TRADES COUNCIL BACKS CENSORSHIP

Dundee Trades Council are proud of the bronze bust of James Connolly in military uniform which adorns their drinking lounge (not that he would have approved at all being an abstainer himself).

Dundee Labour Party supports the PLO and the city has twinned with Nablus in Israel-occupied Palestine. The PLO flag flies above the City Chambers and the Mayor of Nablus, whose legs were blown off by a zionist bomb, was recently in Dundee as a civic guest.

A public plaque was to be commissioned by the Council, in honour of James Connolly and a museum reading room named after him. All of this may seem to paint a picture of a courageous radical Labour movement, strongly anti-imperialist and militant leading the local working class to glorious freedom.

In reality the shabby tactics and timidity of the Labour movement leadership expose the above as hollow posturing.

At a meeting of the full Trades Council on 13 January, the delegate from NUPE witnessed the appalling capitulation of Executive Committee members to a renowned police technique. The delegate's branch AGM had passed a resolution 'strongly' protesting against the arrests of local hunger strike supporters in August of last year. The resolution viewed the charges against the two people as 'a dangerous attack on the democratic rights of all Dundee citizens, political parties and Trade Unionists'.

The police arbitrarily interpreted a City Square Bye-law to silence those active on behalf of Irish political prisoners but the charges have since been dropped. However the police are likely to do exactly the same again in response to any political activity in this area of town. The NUPE members correctly saw the threat that such police behaviour

posed to the democratic rights of all trade unionists and political activists. More importantly the resolution called on the TC to 'effectively organise to uphold the democratic rights of free speech and civil liberty.' The resolution was previously unanimously passed by the Trades Council and is still binding.

The delegate learned that a letter to the Chief Constable had been written but, incredibly, on the basis of police reports shown to the Secretary of the TC it was not sent! According to the Secretary these reports consisted of statements about 'IRA supporters', 'out-of-town elements', 'arrest for public urination' etc all of which was ascribed to a march in November organised by the Dundee Irish Republican Solidarity Committee and nothing to do with the campaign against the charges.

The police are trying on a crude smear campaign against the DIRSC and hence anyone connected with the struggle for democratic rights in Dundee.

The chairman of the TC Davy Thomson, a Communist Party member, said the TC could not associate itself with a '...bunch of piss-artists' and rambled on about STUC policy on Ireland.

The Executive, on the slanderous say-so of Dundee police, have resorted to the lowest distortion in order to justify doing nothing. In doing so they stand squarely alongside the police.

The Executive is entirely composed of members of the Communist Party who have dominated the TC for decades and whose horizons extend no further than the latest STUC resolution. It is tempting to imagine their response to their

own police reports and files.

The NUPE delegate was not allowed to fully express his point of view but other delegates clearly saw through the dealing and political cowardice of the Executive in attempting to ditch the NUPE resolution, which was finally referred back. At the forthcoming AGM the NUPE delegate will demand to see the police reports shown to the secretary and that Thomson withdraw his remarks.

MT

TERROR VICTIM

On 24 January 21 year old Anthony Harker was shot dead by an UDR patrol in Armagh. The police admitted afterwards that he was unarmed. This was the culmination of years of harassment: Harker wrote in his diary that in a period of two months he was stopped and questioned 70 times by the British forces. In October 1979 he was sentenced to six months in prison for the 'crime' of being assaulted by the RUC after refusing to name a youth they were chasing. Weighing seven stone, Harker was charged with assaulting several RUC men. He was later charged with 'Breach of the Peace' and given a three month concurrent sentence for wearing an Irish nationalist badge. In condemning the murder, Derry Sinn Fein stated that the responsibility for his death 'cannot be shrugged off by calling another cosmetic enquiry'.

REVIEW

Ngugi

Detained African Writers Series – Heinemann

A Writer's prison diary

The diary of a writer who was politically detained in Kamati maximum security prison in Kenya.

Ngugi: One man among the many who have written of the oppression of the peasants of Africa. This man wrote a play from which the peasants of Africa could learn of their history. This man was abducted and imprisoned without trial. This man, kidnapped and held to ransom – the ransom being that no-one should try to teach the people of Africa their cultural history because it would expose the imperialists, their capitalist system and the black and white comprador bourgeoisie. This man, an African, saw the evil of imperialism and its creation of capitalist societies which starve the poor to feed the rich. This man decided enough was enough. This man wrote of the struggle of the African people against the oppression of the imperialists and their capitalist system.

The prison diary of Ngugi describes the prison routine and the prison authorities and how the prison tries to break the minds of all the detained prisoners. Although he is detained his struggle is not at its end. The longer he is locked up in his cell the further back his mind would go on the history of the struggle of the African people. First came the

missionaries and then the soldiers. The land would be divided and guarded by the soldiers, the people driven from their homelands and forbidden to return. This is what the African people received for sharing what they had – ROBBERY. The people realised that imperialism had to be destroyed along with the capitalists who reigned through imperialism. So the struggle began between oppressor and oppressed in Africa.

Ngugi describes the struggle of the Kenyan people against British imperialism when it first colonised Kenya, and the struggle of their children now fighting against the neo-colonial system of imperialism. Ngugi quotes how a British colonialist depicted the corrupted life of British rule in Kenya:

'Whoring, Hunting and Drinking why worry? Work on the land is done by a gang of African boys.'

Ngugi reflects upon the history of British imperialist suppression of the Kenyan people fighting for their right to self-determination. The imperialists' reactionary violence brought many pro-

tests. As Marcus Garvey wrote to Lloyd George in 1922:

'Four hundred million negroes through the Universal Negro Improvement Association hereby register their protest against the brutal manner in which your government has treated the natives of Kenya, East Africa. You have shot down a defenceless people in their own native land exercising their rights as men. Such a policy will aggravate the many historic injustices heaped upon a race that will one day be in a position to truly defend itself not with mere sticks, clubs and stones but with modern implements of science.'

Ngugi describes how the prison system is there to suppress all the political Kenyans who were opposed to British colonialism. The prisoners were denied their rights as prisoners and people. The suppression and torture of the Kenyan people climaxed in 1952-1962. In response to the Kenyan people's national liberation war, British imperialism struck out in a wave of reactionary violence and murder in attempts to turn into slaves the Kenyan people who have, since British imperialists colonised Kenya, struggled against economic, political and cultural slavery. Such was the repression of all the Kenyan people that Eileen Fletcher wrote:

'I have just come back from Kenya where I was sent by the British Government. I have seen Emergency jus-

tice in operation ... African children, in British jails, sentenced to life imprisonment ... all condemned for supposedly Mau Mau offences. All convicted by British Magistrates.'

The book is a serious account of the history of the Kenyan people struggling against British imperialism. Ngugi's written experiences of prison show the nature of imperialism and the struggle of the people of Kenya.

Ngugi and others like him used whatever they possessed to take the struggle forward. For Ngugi it was through his literary skill of writing books and plays. This man wrote simply. So simple were the plays that this man wrote that the children, women and men could act the parts. So simple was the truth in the plays that the people relived every act, every scene. Critics couldn't believe that ordinary peasants were the actors in Ngugi's plays. They implied that the peasants did not understand the life of their ancestors so that the play must have been done by those who were 'educated'. So simple was the message of the truth that each word and each action of Ngugi's books and plays brought the people closer to freedom. The power of Ngugi's work meant that imperialism had to resort to imprisoning him in an attempt to stifle him. His prison diary is ample testimony that they have failed – and that indeed they have only served to sharpen Ngugi's struggle.

Garvey Harrison

Dowd and Nordonne were captured, with Sean Kinsella, after a shootout in Liverpool on 10 July 1975. After the shoot out ended none of the three resisted arrest and surrendered peacefully. Immediately upon capture the police brutality began.

Nordonne was thrown, hands handcuffed behind his back, into the back of a police car and his trousers, socks and shoes forcibly removed. With his face forced into the seat and a policeman either side of him, he was beaten in the small of the back and kidneys all the way to the station. In the station the remainder of his clothing was forcibly removed. Handcuffed and naked he was threatened with assassination by the UDA, slapped, punched and had his testicles twisted and pulled until he collapsed. Lying on the floor, handcuffed and naked, he was kicked, punched and had his stomach stamped on by the cowardly police thugs. This brutality left him unable to get up for pain. Lying curled up on the floor with swollen testicles, shooting pains in the head, bleeding in the mouth and racked with pain, he was again kicked and hit.

Nordonne was held in a cell without a mattress or blankets. The 'food' took the form of a sandwich thrown on to the floor. When he asked for water he was dragged to a basin of filthy water and had his head plunged into it. Needless to say all this brutality was simply denied by the police and the then Labour government.

Brendan Dowd's beatings also began in the police van where he was kicked, punched and had his head repeatedly smashed into the floor. In the station the police punched him, smashed his head on the floor, poked fingers into his eyes, stamped repeatedly on his naked feet. He was punched and kicked in the chest, face, stomach and kidneys. His beatings were so severe that he collapsed and woke up to find himself in hospital in the Intensive Care Unit with a drip in his arm. It was five days before he recovered.

Both men, refusing to recognise the imperialist court, were convicted in May 1976. The British ruling class' fear of the revolutionary Volunteers of the IRA was amply demonstrated in the sentences given to Nordonne: three life sentences; two of 20 years; five of 18 years; three of 15 years; one of 10 years; one of 7 years!

In the tradition of the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed Irish people both Dowd and Nordonne continued to resist inside prison as they had resisted outside before their capture. For this they have both been subjected to the extremity of organised bureaucratic sadism in the British imperialist prison system.

Solitary

Between 17 July 1975 and 31 October 1977 Brendan Dowd spent 23 months in solitary confinement:

17 July 1975 - 17 August 1976

16 September 1976 - 10 March 1977

30 June 1977 - 31 October 1977

IRISH PRISONERS IN ENGLISH GAOLS

Brendan Dowd & Steven Nordonne

Brendan Dowd and Steven Nordonne are both IRA Volunteers captured in 1975 as part of an IRA Active Service Unit. Their story exposes the police and prison brutality directed against the Volunteers by the British ruling class and its agents: brutality designed to terrorise the oppressed into submission. It also exposes the sophisticated system of lies and hypocrisy – dubbed British 'justice' – designed to hide the reality of imperialist 'democracy' from the working class and oppressed in Britain.

In this same period he was transferred no less than ten times! From Strangeways to Liverpool to Strangeways to Bristol to Albany to Wandsworth to Gartree to Long Lartin to Manchester to Canterbury to Parkhurst. He is now in Leicester Special Security Block where he is one of only six prisoners in the SSB (see FRFI 14).

This 23 months of solitary confinement was sometimes on punishment, sometimes under the notorious 'Good Order and Discipline' Rule 43 and sometimes, according to the prison authorities, due to 'shortage of suitable facilities'. Of course solitary confinement is solitary confinement whatever the threadbare lying excuse offered for it.

Most of Dowd's 'punishments' have resulted from deliberate screw provocation. In Albany, for example, after three weeks of association, he was confronted by an unnecessary and officious screw escort to clean out his cell for the third time in one day. He refused and got a sentence of solitary confinement. Whilst on the block more provocation led to another 7 days solitary. When this ended he was kept in solitary under Rule 43. This led to the Albany protest in which six POWs were brutally beaten (see FRFI 14). On 22 November 1976 he petitioned the Governor and got no answer. In protest he tipped his chamber pot over the Governor. Another 44 days. And so it went on. The purpose clear: by one means or another Brendan Dowd was to be kept isolated in an effort to break him and restrict the revolutionary influence of Irish POWs over other prisoners.

23 months of solitary confinement is torture: torture carried out in British prisons under a British Labour government. The fact that such torture passes by in silence is eloquent testimony to the crooked and corrupt character of the British Labour Party and trade union movement.

Control Unit

Where Dowd suffered lengthy periods of solitary confinement Steven Nordonne was subjected to the more refined but nonetheless brutal control unit.

Whilst in the security block at Walton (Liverpool) Nordonne, with other prisoners, broke up his cell in protest at the inhuman conditions. He was sentenced to 56 days solitary confinement. He was transferred to the Wakefield control unit to serve this sentence.

With its customary flair for changing the names but not the substance of its repressive techniques the British ruling class, in the guise of the Labour government, 'closed' the control unit at Wakefield in October 1975 and re-opened it immediately rechristening it F Wing. This name change silenced the bleats of liberals offended by the too-obvious barbarity of the control unit but did not, of course, affect the actual conditions suffered by the victims of the control unit.

On 19 August, 1976 Steven Nordonne was thrown into the 'closed' control unit, which is a separate block against the perimeter wall of Wakefield. He was placed in a padded cell with no clothes, no books, no mattress, no bedding, no heating, no window. The cell light was switched on and off at varying times of the day and night: the only 'window' being opaque glass bricks set in the wall. His meals were also issued at varying times so that eventually he lost all track of time. After two weeks he got a mattress and a blanket. After four weeks he was moved. His exercise was taken alone in a separate exercise yard where he was only allowed to use half the yard – approximately 25 yards by 8 yards.

These inhuman conditions were so psychologi-

cally oppressive that it took Nordonne two weeks to write one side of a letter. After release from the unit it was some time before he could speak or hold a conversation. He suffered from amnesia and loss of weight. This too took place in a British prison under a British Labour government!

No such thing as solitary confinement

Both Dowd and Nordonne took the British Government to the European Court. Both, predictably, lost their cases. Dowd accused the British Government of breaking Article 3 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in that the beating he took in Liverpool and the 23 months solitary confinement constituted torture or inhuman and degrading treatment. Nordonne's application concentrated on the control unit which again, he stated, constituted torture or inhuman and degrading treatment. The European Commission of Human Rights ruled out both complaints – proving beyond doubt that the phrase 'human rights' only means anything to imperialism when it is used to spread allegations about the Soviet Union. When it comes to captured enemies of imperialism anything goes.

The most important part of the European court case is the British government's defence which is a classic example of the subtle hypocrisy with which British imperialism seeks to clothe its naked barbarity. Most things they simply denied including the actual existence of solitary confinement!

'The concept of solitary confinement ... suggests a form of detention whereby a prisoner is detained in total isolation from all forms of human contact. There is no such condition in the prison system of England and Wales. However, there are distinct regimes of imprisonment which may be applied to a prisoner in particular circumstances, which reduce the opportunities normally available to prisoners to associate with one another.' (British government submission to European Commission)

This is the very language of imperialist trickery: no solitary confinement – not in democratic Britain! – but, perhaps, now and then, some restriction on association ... possibly even to the extent of no association at all but being locked up 24 hours a day on your own in a cell! The claim that there is no solitary confinement must have come as a great surprise to Brendan Dowd after 23 months of this 'non-existent' regime. It must be a great comfort for Doug Wakefield, who suffered for over 1000 days, to know that he was not in solitary confinement ... he was merely under a 'distinct regime' which 'reduced' his opportunities to associate with other human beings. That the smooth liars of the British ruling class can get away with this filth is the result of the complete failure of the working class movement in this country to take any significant action whatever in defence of not only Irish POWs but all prisoners.

Terry Marlowe

Racism in prisons

The increasing number of black prisoners gives alarming evidence of the mounting attack on black people in Britain.

Since the uprisings last year the percentage of black inmates has reached 50% in some borstals. Ashford Remand Centre in Middlesex has a 50% black population and generally in the South-East there are 10 times as many black prisoners as anywhere else in the country.

'If you have 40% black and 60% white people in prisons, society should be worried'. So says one prison governor. Indeed so worried are they that they are taking some very extreme measures to paper over the blatant racism that faces black prisoners. Race Relations officers are being appointed inside prisons. Some screws are being made to attend seminars on racial minorities and

there are handbooks floating around that advise 'more enlightened treatment of Rastafarians'. This advice is a little late for one murdered Rasta Richard Campbell who was drugged, force-fed and beaten in Ashford Remand Centre.

The authorities' fear of black prisoners organising has led to them trying to cut down the number of black prisoners concentrated in the South-East by sending them to other parts of the country. This inevitably means a far greater burden on their families and friends who wish to visit and increases the isolation of the prisoners.

From the minute they enter the prison gates black prisoners live under the constant threat of violence from racist screws who try and provoke confrontation in order to put them into the punishment cells.

Finally, there are moves afoot to recruit not only more black people on to the Boards of Visitors (there are 39 at present) but also more black screws. Less than one in every hundred screws is black. One prison official hit the nail on the head when he said:

'We have the same problem here as the police – the wish among minority groups not to be identified with the white, controlling class.'

Carol Owen

PRISONERS STRIKE!

From 18 to 20 January hundreds of prisoners in Albany, Parkhurst, Long Lartin, Hull and other prisons went on strike demanding: the abolition of the parole scheme for fixed sentence prisoners; half remission; legal representation for lifers on parole interviews; yearly parole reviews for lifers; abolition of the lifetime parole licence; reasons for parole refusals to be made to known to applicants; own clothing; 4 visits per month; 8 letters per month; 1 food parcel a week.

The abolition of parole for fixed sentence prisoners is particularly important. The parole scheme is designed to divide and control the fixed sentence prisoners by holding over their heads the possibility of parole on condition of good behaviour – that is to say submission to the regime. The parole licence also allows the state to maintain control over a prisoner after being released on parole.

Support for the strike was particularly solid in Parkhurst and Albany on the Isle of Wight. Over 140 prisoners in Parkhurst and about 200 in Albany joined the protest. Considering the enormous difficulties involved in organising such protests the strike has proved to be a success and has shown the determined and growing resistance

of all prisoners to the murderous British imperialist prison system.

Prior to the strike itself petitions were circulated in a number of prisons. Over 250 prisoners signed in Long Lartin, over 200 in Albany and over 100 in Parkhurst. The petitions drew the connection between the demands of prisoners in Britain and the new rights won by the heroic struggle of the Irish POWs in H-Block Long Kesh. Neatly turning British imperialist propaganda back on the oppressors, Albany prisoners declared in their petition:

'In agreeing to these conditions [ie the rights won by the H-Block hunger strike] the Government emphasized that they were not "POLITICAL STATUS" because they applied to

ALL conforming prisoners. That is all we are demanding – that all prisoners in all parts of the United Kingdom be treated in one way.'

The Long Lartin petition also drew attention to the deaths in prison citing the cases of C Winters (22) who committed suicide and S Ledeczi (54) who died of a heart attack, connecting this to the organised neglect and denial of prisoners' medical needs.

As always it is not the Labour Party 'democrats', the civil libertarians, the trade unions and all the other 'defenders of democracy' who fight the oppressive prison system but the prisoners themselves. In conducting this fight the prisoners are not only defending themselves but also defending the democratic rights of all workers – in or out of prison.

The Revolutionary Communist Group and supporters of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* give their full support to the prisoners and their demands.

Terry Marlowe

RCCG-FRFI

MONTHLY Round-up

UDA thugs attack two FRFI sellers

On Saturday 23 January, UDA thugs attacked two Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! sellers in Grangemouth town centre, Scotland. They grabbed the papers shouting 'you're not selling papish rubbish', and they started ripping the papers in half and throwing them in the air. As the two FRFI sellers tried to salvage what they could, a UDA thug punched one FRFI seller in the mouth and told them they had three minutes to clear off or there was a team coming down to hammer them. But the FRFI sellers will not be intimidated by UDA thugs, the RCC will be back to reassert their right to sell Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!

Khan Family Defence Committee

On 16 January a large street meeting was held in Longsight in defence of the Khan family, and people gave their names and addresses to be contacted for local anti-imperialist work. FRFI Manchester has

given, and will continue to give, its full and active support to the Khan Family Defence Committee. In this struggle the people of Longsight are up against the racist British state and its immigration controls.

Iran Solidarity

Over 200 people marched from a rally in Hyde Park to the Iranian Embassy in London on Saturday 23 January. The marchers kept up a militant chant of 'Down with Khomeini! Long Live Revolution' as they passed the Iranian Embassy whose officials refused to accept a letter of protest. At the rally the demonstrators heard speeches denouncing the brutal Khomeini regime which has murdered over 4000 revolutionaries during the past 4 months and now is torturing 3000 political prisoners in the gaols once used by the Shah's Savak. A speaker from the Revolutionary Communist Group was roundly applauded when he declared that the struggle of the Iranian people was a part of the world wide struggle against imperialism and that the Iranian

people, like their brothers and sisters in South Africa, Ireland and El Salvador were fighting against the same imperialist enemy that oppresses black people in Britain.

The demonstration was supported by MSS - Supporters of PMOI, supporters of the OIPFG and SETAD as well as a contingent from FRFI supporters and Southall students. The RCT-P, the SWP and Workers Power were also present.

Defend Bill Bolloten!

Charged under a 1361 Act for holding a street meeting in Bradford city centre in support of the Bradford 12, Bill Bolloten has now found that the court case is likely to cost hundreds of pounds. Legal aid is not being granted and if the police are successful in getting Bill bound over he will probably have to pay not only his own but also the prosecution costs!

Bradford FRFI supporters are mounting a wide campaign to expose police censorship of anti-racists and to fight the archaic and reactionary laws

being used. Money is urgently needed. Send donations to Bradford FRFI c/o Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate, Bradford 1. Support the picket of Bradford Magistrates Court on Monday 1 March, 9.30am.

AAM Demonstration in York

On Saturday 23 January a contingent of FRFI supporters joined the AAM demonstration in York to show their solidarity with black workers on strike at Wilson Rowntree in South Africa. The owners of the factory, Rowntree Mackintosh also have a factory in York. At the rally an FRFI supporter delivered a solidarity message ending with the call 'Victory to the Strikers! Victory to the ANC!'

The demonstration, one of the few acts of solidarity with the black strikers in South Africa, was unfortunately marred by a racist outburst by Big Flame member Max Farrar who interrupted the FRFI speaker shouting 'What about Poland you f...ers'. This racist affront was treated appropriately and the demonstrators responded by committing themselves to continue solidarity whatever the obstacles from middle class racist 'socialists'.

North London Irish Solidarity Committee

Following the successful NLISC demonstration on 19 December the committee held a public forum on 21 January to consolidate and take forward its work.

Besides planning for a further demonstration in North London for Saturday 20 March, the Committee agreed to a wide ranging programme of solidarity work which includes mass leafletting of working class estates and shopping districts, street meetings, pub sales and other activities.

The committee is also planning a

march in early May to commemorate the murder of Bobby Sands MP who died on hunger strike in the concentration camp of H-Block Long Kesh.

The NLISC thanks FRFI for its coverage and support of the committee's work and urges all North London readers and supporters of FRFI to join the NLISC, which can be contacted by writing to NLISC, BM Box 4835, London WC1N 3XX.

Manchester Irish Solidarity

On 2 January FRFI Manchester held a successful street meeting in Longsight calling for 'Victory to the Irish people! Smash British imperialism!' The North West of England Irish Solidarity Committee has been meeting in Manchester and organising street meetings mobilising for a demonstration on 20 February: ask FRFI sellers for more details.

Successful street meeting

The North London Irish Solidarity Committee held a very successful street meeting in Archway on 30 January. Local people responded enthusiastically to speeches calling for Victory to the Irish People. Ben Hill, brother of an Irish POW made a strong speech in which he pointed out that racist oppression by the British state was creating many more black political prisoners and that, along with Irish prisoners, they were developing a movement inside the prisons.

Hundreds of leaflets advertising the demonstration on 20 March were given out and 109 copies of FRFI sold. As usual the police came saying it was illegal to use a megaphone. However on seeing 19 people participating in the meeting and the local support it had they beat a retreat muttering that they would be back.

EVENTS

6-12 FEBRUARY

SOUTH LONDON
Street Meeting
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!
Saturday 6 February
Tooting Broadway Tube 2pm
Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee

MANCHESTER
Street Meeting
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!
Saturday 6 February
Longsight market 11am
Called by North West Irish Solidarity Committee

MANCHESTER
Picket Timothy Raison
Tuesday 9 February
West Indian Sports and Social Clubs
Westwood Street 2-2.30pm
Called by Khan Family Defence Committee

LEEDS
Public Meeting
Victory to the Irish People!
Thursday 11 February
Park Lane College 12.30pm
Called by Park Lane College FRFI Society

LEEDS
Public Forum
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!
Thursday 11 February
Leeds Trades Club
Seville Mount, Leeds 7.30pm

LIVERPOOL
Public Meeting
Victory to the Irish People!
Film: Prisoner of War
Friday 12 February 7.30pm
Details from FRFI sellers.

13-19 FEBRUARY

MANCHESTER
Street Meeting
Victory to the Irish People!
Saturday 13 February
Moss Side Shopping Centre 11am

NORTH LONDON
Street Meeting
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!
Saturday 13 February
Kilburn Square 2pm
Called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee

EDINBURGH
Public Meeting
Defend Socialist Poland!
Wednesday 17 February
Edinburgh Trades Council Picardy Place 7.30pm

20-26 FEBRUARY

SOUTH LONDON
Street Meeting
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!
Saturday 20 February
Balham Tube 2pm
Called by South London Irish Solidarity Committee

GLASGOW
DEMONSTRATION
Victory to the Irish People!
Saturday 20 February
Assemble Royston Hill 11.30am
Called by Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee

MANCHESTER
DEMONSTRATION
Victory to the Irish People!
Saturday 20 February
Assemble opposite Birley High School Moss Side 12.30pm
Called by North West Irish Solidarity Committee

LEEDS

Public Meeting
Imperialist Hands Off Socialist Poland!
Thursday 25 February
Park Lane College 12.30pm

27-5 MARCH

SOUTH LONDON
Notice
Demonstration called for Saturday 27 February cancelled.
South London Irish Solidarity Committee

BRADFORD
Picket
Defend Bill Bolloten!
Fight Police Censorship!
Monday 1 March
Bradford Magistrates Court 9.30am

BRADFORD
Public Meeting
Victory to the ANC!
Smash Apartheid!
Film: Generations of Resistance
Thursday 4 March
Queens Hall
Morley Street 7.30pm
Admission 50p

COMING SOON

NORTH LONDON
Public Meeting
Victory to the ANC!
Smash Apartheid!
Thursday 11 March
John Barnes Library
Camden Road N7 7.30pm

LEEDS
Anti-Imperialist Rally
Details from FRFI sellers or write to FRFI, Box LAP 10, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2

DEADLINE FOR ADVERTS FOR FRFI 17: 22.2.82

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St Andrews Square 5pm

Glasgow
Lloyds Bank
Friday 12 February
Corner of Hope Street and Bothwell Street 12.30-2pm

Leeds
Lloyds Bank
Friday 12 February
Corner of The Headrow and Vicar Lane 12.00-2pm

London
Barclays & Lloyds Banks
Friday 12 February
Lombard Street. Meet Lombard Street exit Bank tube at 12 noon

SUPPORTER GROUPS

LEEDS
Park Lane College FRFI Society
Bookstall every Tuesday 12.30-2pm
Park Lane College

LEEDS meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at 7.30pm. Next meeting 18 February at Leeds Trades Club, Savile Mount, Leeds 7. Details from FRFI, Box LAP 10, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.

NORTH LONDON meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at 7.30pm. Next meetings 9 & 23 February at Mitford Centre, Mitford Road, off Tollington Way, N19. For details write to NLFRFI, BM Box 4835, London, WC1N 3XX.

BRADFORD meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 7.30pm. Next meeting 18 February at Conference Room, Queens Hall, Morley Street.

SOUTH LONDON meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at 7.30pm. Next meetings 16 February and 2 March at Jeffreys Library, Jeffreys Road, Stockwell. For details write to SLFRFI, BM Box 4835, London, WC1N 3XX.

GLASGOW Next meeting Saturday 27 February. For details contact Box 40, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh or your local FRFI seller.

EDINBURGH meets fortnightly. Next meeting Sunday 14 February 7.30pm at First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

DUNDEE meets fortnightly. Next meeting Sunday 21 February. For details contact Box 40, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh or your local FRFI seller.

ABERDEEN For details of FRFI activities contact FRFI c/o Boomtown Books, 167 King Street, Aberdeen.

LIVERPOOL FR group Liverpool meets fortnightly on Fridays. Next meeting 19 February 7.30pm at Stanley House, Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool 8.

NORTH LONDON DEMONSTRATION

Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!
Saturday 20 March
Assemble Archway Tube 2.00
Called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

Called by Anti-Apartheid Movement
Isolate Apartheid South Africa Now!
Sanctions Now!
Sunday 14 March

FREE THE BRADFORD 12!

National demonstration in Leeds
Saturday 3 April
Bradford 12 trial begins
Monday 26 April at Leeds Crown Court

STREET MEETINGS

LEEDS
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SOLIDARITY COMMITTEES

NORTH LONDON IRISH SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
Meets fortnightly on Thursdays.
Next meetings:
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Mitford Centre, Mitford Road, off Tollington Way, N19.
Thursdays 4 & 18 March 7.00pm
Camden Labour Club, Carol Street, NW1

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LETTERS

SWP and Poland

Dear FRFI,
In its enthusiastic support for Solidarity in Poland the Socialist Workers Party have shown their middle class hatred for the socialist countries and found themselves keeping company with anti-communists and members of the ruling classes. Recently I came across a copy of Socialist Worker (SW) that urged Solidarity members to use violence and FRFI reader's might like to know more about this interesting change of position.

In SW 26 December we can read "...the struggle has to be waged with offensive demands and offensive methods, with a call to smash the power of the authorities and a bullet or a petrol bomb for every officer..." The article went on to advise Solidarity members that strikes alone were not enough, called for confrontation on the streets and the use of makeshift weapons. When I mentioned change of position take a look at SW 7 November: "...planting bombs is no substitute for socialist politics...there is a contradiction between the bombing tactic anywhere and socialist politics...they do not speed the socialist victory which alone can end imperialism".

Referring to who? Yes, the IRA. So its alright to urge the bomb and bullet when they are to be used against a socialist system and scandalous when used by an anti-imperialist movement against Britain! Strikes and through the factory were the direction the SWP pointed the militant youth of Toxteth and Brixton, called them street people and condemned petrol bombs. Could it be that when their imperialist Britain is under attack it is wrong and when Socialist Poland is threatened it is right?

GC
Edinburgh

Police attack unemployed

Dear FRFI,
I am writing to tell you how the Right to Work march on 30 November was attacked by the SPG.

A friend and me went to Woolwich to go on the march. We waited in Powis Street until the march started. We joined in and went along, everyone was talking and we were all walking along peacefully. When we got to the roundabout near Woolwich ferry the police stopped us and refused us to march to Lewisham. There were about 700 of us so we slowed down and dispersed. About 50 of us were walking down Powis Street and nobody seemed happy with what had happened. Some were shouting a bit but there was no trouble.

We walked round to the polytechnic and stopped. Suddenly we were attacked by SPGs - there were two vans and a car. One of the students of the polytechnic came out to see what the shouting was about and was knocked in the bollocks by an SPG. They were shouting and swearing at us and pushing everyone. They jumped two of the lads that had been at the front of the march, ones that had been talking to the leaders of the march.

Well if this is justice of the law on unemployed people who march to say how they need jobs, all police and SPGs can F...Off.

JKW and TMB
and from the rest of the young people who were attacked by the police for no reason.

Bradford police

Dear FRFI,
I am writing to you to tell you how bad police harassment is getting here. Now you can't even make a phone call without attracting their 'attention'. I was recently in a phone-box outside Bradford College. As I was going in I noticed a police car parked outside. I was in the middle of my call when the door opened, and without any explanation, I barged a policeman. I told him to get out and started to push him out. He forced his way in and started to write down the number on the phone. By this time of course I'd lost all the money I'd put in the phone. The cop began walking back to his car so I went after him and demanded the money which he'd made me waste. His reaction? He said, 'If you want 10p you can f... have it'. He reached into his pocket, flicked 10p onto the pavement and drove off. I'm sure many people in Bradford have got far worse stories than this to tell. What can you expect from a police force that sets dogs onto black people?

A student at Bradford College

Joining RCG

Dear comrades
I am writing this letter to explain my reasons for leaving the YCL and CP and joining the RCG. I joined the YCL roughly at the start of the hunger strike, as I thought that they were a revolutionary party, but found out they were in cahoots with the Labour Party. During my short stay in the Party I found out to my disbelief that they did not support the socialist countries and that they did not support the Provisional IRA. On such major issues I found them totally unacceptable, and I could not be a part of any organisation which was not revolutionary. But my main reason for writing this letter is for anybody who is thinking of joining the CP, YCL to think again. Everybody makes mistakes.

JD
Grangemouth - Scotland

Economics

Dear comrades,
I find your newspaper FRFI very interesting, but I wonder why you don't mention social economics or capital economics. Don't you think that these two facts are the basic problems of our society as it is today?

The vast majority of the British reading public find economics rather difficult to understand. I think that it could be easily and simply explained in your newspaper.

Hope to see you continue the good work.

Comrade JB
Barnsley

Editorial comment: The question of economics is indeed very important. We have published a major analysis of the capitalist crisis 'Inflation, the Crisis and the Post War Boom' which can be obtained for 50p + 20p p&p. We also have a short pamphlet 'The State and the Capitalist Crisis' which costs 35p (postage included). In addition in FRFI 6 we published a major analysis of British imperialist banks which today dominate the British economy and the economies of many oppressed nations.

Catholic church

Dear Editor,
I'm a regular reader of FRFI and as I was reading the last issue (15) of FRFI, it wasn't long before I came upon the article 'Catholic Church aids British Imperialism'. As a catholic, I was surprised at this article, and I think I speak for many catholics who read this paper when I say that this 'attack' was unjustified and unwelcome. I'm open to any criticism and would like to know the views of fellow readers. Is this article

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**FRFI,
BCM Box 5909,
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SEND US YOUR LETTERS
We welcome letters from readers. Please keep them as short as you can

Iran

Dear Comrades
The IRP/Khomeini regime pretends to be anti-imperialist and gives verbal 'support' to anti-imperialist movements. They do this in order to keep for themselves the benefits of the people's rising against the Shah and world imperialism in February 1979. The IRP/Khomeini regime pretends that their present 'anti-imperialist' regime is what the people revolted for three years ago. But the fact is that the people wanted reactionary and imperialist hands off Iran. The people's rising was for democracy and a better life.

Everyday the IRP/Khomeini regime is making new contracts with imperialism. While saying that they support the Palestinian cause they buy arms from the enemy of the

Palestinian people: Israel. Early last summer whilst claiming to support the Irish people's struggle against British imperialism they made a contract worth £1 billion with British imperialism. Only recently they began talks with Pentagon agents to get \$2 billion worth of arms from US imperialism. These arms are to be paid for with Iranian assets released when the regime freed the American spies. In other words the IRP/Khomeini regime is using the people's money to buy arms from US imperialism which will be used against the people.

It is very interesting that the IRP/Khomeini regime - like all pro-imperialist regimes - is supporting 'Solidarity'. These hypocrites talk about 'repression' in Poland but not about the real repression in Iran. The IRP/Khomeini regime naturally supports 'Solidarity' because imperialism and all pro-imperialist regimes are united against the socialist countries and the camp of socialism.

Victory to the Iranian People!
Long Live International Solidarity Against Imperialism!

Shahin Shirazi
London

condemning the Church? If not/so then can you explain? I know it is true the church did ask the IRA to lay down their arms, but as I've said, this article wasn't in due course and I think a more detailed article is needed so as to understand what is really being said. I think, especially in Northern Ireland, catholics get criticised enough from the press etc. Please understand me, I write this article in strong feeling and not in any way to offend anyone, especially the journalist.

GH

Edinburgh

Editorial note: In reply to comrade GH we would like to say the following. The article does not attack Catholics. Far from it. What the article attacks is the Catholic Church which played and continues to play an uncompromisingly reactionary role in relation to the Republican Movement. Indeed it has always done so and James Connolly, who himself was a Catholic, strongly criticised the Irish Catholic Church. We would also point out that the Republican Movement in Ireland today has also pointed to and attacked the reactionary role of the Catholic Church. For us the important question is not whether one is a Catholic or not, but which side you are on in the anti-imperialist struggle. The Catholic Church as an institution has proved itself to be on the side of imperialism.

TOM sectarians

Dear FRFI,
How surprised and pleased we of the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee were to be invited to meet the Clydeside Troops Out Movement. After their decision in February 1981 to do no public work in Glasgow they had walked out of the Glasgow Hunger Strike Action Committee because a march in support of the hunger strikers was planned. Then they submerged without trace here until now. Then, we thought, at last they have realised that Ireland is still unfree and that we in Scotland should be doing something about it.

Well, we were wrong. Indeed, they are proposing a march, which we shall support fully. But had they asked us along to invite our support? NO! We had been asked along for TOM to ask us not to organise any more marches in Glasgow between now and their proposed march in 3 months' time.

Now, Clydeside TOM, the Strathclyde Police didn't want us to march, the Loyalists didn't want us to march, you didn't want us to march a year ago and you don't want us to march now.

The answer is the same this January as it was last February and has been ever since. We want to march, ordinary republicans want to march,

people in Ireland, struggling day by day against British repression and fighting it with unmatched courage want to see as much support and activity on the streets of Britain as possible. We are committed to continue our last 15 months' activity and to step it up, not down.

We call upon the Clydeside TOM to support our march in Glasgow on 20 February with the same energy we will put into supporting their demonstration in March.

Down with sectarianism!
Victory to Ireland's Freedom Fighters!

Force British Imperialism out of Ireland!

In solidarity
Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee

New reader

Dear FRFI,
I accidentally came across one of your newspapers and was really fascinated by the things I read in it. I have always wondered where or who could print the truth of what really goes on. Now that I have finally and permanently gotten rid of my TV I would be interested in being a regular reader!

Yours faithfully
ECG
Walthamstow
PS Keep on printing!

Mitterrand's racism

Dear comrades,
Since its election in May, France's new social-democratic government, supported the the racist 'Communist' Party, by the aristocratic union leaders and a degenerate array of Trotskyist and Maoist sects, has clearly shown itself a willing administrator of the French bourgeois state and French imperialism. The task of the PS government is to use its influence to obtain voluntary sacrifices from the working class in the 'national interest', ie in the interests of French imperialism. The government's record to date is indeed impressive (as far as the ruling class is concerned!). Unemployment is over 2 million and increasing, redundancies are multiplying, inflation is 15% and rising, and living standards are falling. In other words, in France as in Britain, the capitalist crisis is being resolved at the expense of the working class. The achievements of French 'socialism'!

However French workers are not remaining passive in face of this offensive. A wave of strikes has hit French industry. Needless to say, the opportunist union leaders are doing their best to isolate and sterilise those struggles. At Renault, for example, the 'Communist' CGT called for an immediate return to work, denounced the strikers and praised the generosity of the bosses! Hardly surprising that CGT delegates are greeted with a barrage of heckling when they address workers' meetings.

State racism, harassment and deportation of immigrants continue under the new government. In September mainly black youth in the ghettos of Lyons rose up in protest against unemployment, social misery and police repression. Battles were fought with the police, shop windows were smashed, cars were liberated and set alight. As one youth remarked 'Stealing from the rich is not stealing'. The bourgeoisie was incensed at such disrespect for its property. Its state replied with greater repression by the police and courts and with insidious racist lies about the delinquency of immigrants. As in Britain, such revolts will inevitably become more widespread and more organised in future.

Despite deceitful talk about 'the end of neo-colonialism' and a 'new deal' for the Third World, French imperialism is alive and well under its new supervisors. Military and economic links have been strengthened with many countries on the African continent and France's military presence there has been reinforced. The record of the PS speaks for itself. It was in power during the wars in Indochina and Algeria, and it was Mitterrand who put into practice the formula 'In Algeria our only negotiation will be war'. The PS reproached Giscard for not giving firm enough support to the racist state of Israel and refuses to implement sanctions against South Africa for 'tactical reasons', while hypocritically declaring its opposition to apartheid.

It can be seen that the

situation facing revolutionaries in France and England is very similar.

Keep up the excellent work with FRFI!

DP
Lyons

NCP no different

Dear Editor,
In FR14 you attacked the New Communist Party (NCP) for its failure to allow four of its members to participate in the South London Hunger Strike Action Committee (SLHSAC), on the absurd grounds that the Committee was 'Trotskyite'! You also exposed them for pretending to support the struggle for Irish freedom from British imperialism, while the leadership publicly disowned the NCP from the Committee, at a time when some of the finest Irishmen were in need of solidarity, as they lay dying in Long Kesh Concentration Camp.

Since the ending of the hunger strike the NCP remains as ambiguous as ever on Ireland. In the Young Worker issue no 3 Autumn 81 (youth paper of the NCP) an article appeared entitled 'A lesson from the Six Counties'. The author, Gavin Roberts, does not appear to have learned anything from his trip to Ireland, except that the Republican youth 'will continue to fight for Irish freedom, despite all the terror from the British army'. (Has not that always been the case, ever since Britain was in Ireland?).

The article did not mention the role the NCP has to play in the Irish solidarity work in Britain, nor did it say whether it supports the armed struggle of the IRA/INLA.

How strange that is for Communists. I thought that as the Republican Movement is anti-imperialist, the NCP would support them 100% unconditionally, and not be afraid to say so. Communists are supposed to support all oppressed people - so why not the Irish?

It appears that the NCP are no different from the SWP/IMG/CP/WRP etc, so they drag the name of Communists through the mud by their shameful behaviour. Is it any wonder that Irish people mistrust Communists if they behave in this way? As FRFI said if people in these organisations want to support the Irish people then it is best if they leave them and build a mass genuine anti-imperialist movement with no apologies or ambiguities.

CMcG
S London

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HANDS OFF IRELAND

IRISH GOVERNMENT DEFEATED

The government of Southern Ireland has fallen, following the defeat of its viciously anti-working class January budget. The government wanted to push up VAT to as much as 30%, extending it for the first time to clothes and footwear, to slash food subsidies, and to tax welfare benefits 'to prevent people on welfare doing better than if they were working'. This brutal package proved too much even for opportunists of the likes of Jim Kemmy or the sticky TD Joe Sherlock who joined the opposition in opposing the government.

Ireland is not only divided politically by imperialism, but is also economically dependent on it. One third of all industrial jobs are in imperialist firms attracted by the massive profits, subsidised out of heavy taxes on the workers. Further, the tiny state has a staggering £4bn foreign debt – about 1/5 of Irish GNP, and higher per head than that of Poland. To keep up the flow of profit and interest out of the country, the southern ruling class must attack the Irish workers.

Unemployment is rising everywhere, but is chronic amongst the youth, who, like their comrades in Britain and Belfast, rose last summer. Enraged by the imperialist murder of the Hunger Strikers last summer, they smashed up the

centre of Dublin. The southern ruling class is terrified of the youth and the workers taking up the anti-imperialist struggle in the south. This explains the vicious attack on Republicans – two of the six recaptured members of the Crumlin Road 8 have received ten year sentences, and although the Embassy 20 trial has not finished, one defendant has already been given a 3 year sentence.

Last summer, a commentator in the *Irish Times* shuddered at the prospect which lies ahead:

'When – for whatever reason – external agencies will lend no more, those who have lived out of the borrowing [he means the workers, not the bankers] will turn to whatever



Garret Fitzgerald

BRITISH SOLDIERS ACQUITTED!

The acquittal of two British soldiers accused of causing the deaths of two Derry youths, Gary English and James Brown, by recklessly driving a land-rover into them during rioting in Derry last April has shown once again the nature of British 'justice' in the North of Ireland.

Those doing the dirty work for British imperialism have again been shown to be immune from the law. The two soldiers were acquitted despite the evidence of eye-witnesses that the land-rover had been driven straight into the youths at a speed of 65 mph, hurling one of the youths a distance of 160 feet. After the verdict was announced the father of one of the dead youths, Mr Michael English, condemned the trial as having been no more than a show trial, pointing out how the authorities had only gone through the motions of prosecuting the soldiers and even then only after considerable pressure by the parents of the dead youths. Paddy Logue, Chairman of Derry H-Block Committee, described the proceedings as legal farce and said that he now expected the soldiers involved to be promoted and the commanding officer to be decorated as happened after the Bloody Sunday killings.

The youth of Derry, however, went beyond verbal condemnation of the result of the trial.

Soon after the announcement of the acquittal of the soldiers a block of business premises, including a bank, in Derry city centre was destroyed by fire,



resulting in tens of thousands of pounds worth of damage. Later a group called 'Bogside Youth against Imperialism' claimed responsibility for the attack which they said was carried out 'to show anger at the decision reached in the show trial into the deaths of Gary English and James Brown and to show defiance of British murder and misrule in Ireland'.

Irish correspondent

damaged the minibus. The fascists had already provided the excuse for police to ban the Commemoration march taking place in Coventry. This ban was merely the latest in a series of bans directed against marches in support of the Irish people's struggle for self-determination.

BANNED AGAIN

Banned from marching in Coventry by the police, the Bloody Sunday Commemoration march nevertheless went ahead in Birmingham.

Over 2,000 people were on the march with contingents from PSF, IRSP, as well as left organisations and Iranian groups. FRFI contingents attended from Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, Liverpool, Manchester and London.

The march was led by a Glasgow band and people joined it along its route, including a number of Asian youths.

At the closing rally a speaker from the Labour Committee on Ireland was jeered when he called on those present to join the Labour Party. In contrast Ranjit Singh of the Indian Workers Movement got loud applause when he denounced the Labour Party for being as criminal as the Tories. He reminded those present that it was the Labour Party which sent the troops into Ireland and withdrew Special Category Status.

A minibus carrying marchers from Coventry was waylaid by fascists who attacked and injured several people and

Electricity protest

Electricity board officials in Belfast and Derry have recently stepped up their cut-offs, and threats to cut off, the electricity supplies of people who have fallen behind in their payments and of those who have allegedly interfered with their electricity meters.

The IRA has warned the electricity board and its officials against this off practice, which is, the IRA 'causing undue hardship to people already on the breadline'.

The IRA state that they will be monitoring the situation and will take action against 'those involved in persecuting ordinary people'.

Reprinted from *An Phoblacht Republican News* 17 December 1982

RUC in crisis

Growing frustration within the RUC at their inability to defeat the IRA finally burst into the open in January with a public row between the Chief Constable, Jack Heron, and the Police Federation. The row stemmed from a meeting of the Police Federation in November of last year at which a motion of no confidence in the Chief Constable and a motion calling for the RUC Reserve to be restructured along the lines of the old 'B' Specials were discussed.

Both motions were put forward by the strong Paisleyite faction which exists in the RUC, particularly among the lower ranks, whose aim is to replace the present 'normalisation' policy being pursued by the British government and which is supported by the Chief Constable by a return to the traditional policy of open terror directed against the nationalist community. In the event both motions were defeated, although the motion of no confidence was lost by only one vote. Instead of being thankful that he won the votes and leaving matters there, however, the Chief Constable early in January exacerbated the situation by making public the contents of a letter which he had sent to the chairman of the Police Federation concerning the proposal to restructure the RUC Reserve – a proposal which he described as 'manifestly improper and highly damaging to the standing of the RUC'. In trying to strengthen his own position in this way,

Derry housewrecking

In December the British army and RUC, in a significant increase in repression, carried out systematic housewrecking and arrest operations throughout the nationalist working class areas.

The actions of the British army and RUC on a single day tell the story. On Thursday 10 December the British army and RUC attacked three different areas in the city. In Dunree Gardens, Creggan, squads of soldiers swooped on the area in Landrovers and Saracens. Eight homes were wrecked ('searched'). Amongst the 'terrorist' articles seized was a tricolour taken from the home of Derek McSwiney. The eight homes were extensively damaged.

In the Shantallow/Galliagh district Mr McCleary of Carranbane Walk found himself the victim of the British army 'search' procedure: his floorboards were ripped up, his storage heater torn apart, his front door and kitchen door pulled apart and his flat left in a shambles. From the beginning of December to Thursday 10 December, this area had already suffered over two dozen such raids.

Terry Marlowe